



PHD

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An Analysis of the Management of State-Maintained Special Schools for Children with
Hearing Impairment in Ghana

Dora Baaba Aidoo

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
University of Bath
Department of Education
June 2011

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DEDICATION

To my sons: Kweku, Kojo, and Kwame.

ABSTRACT

To date the management of state-maintained special schools for children with hearing impairment (SMSSCHI) in Ghana has not been extensively researched. As a result, the way such schools are managed is inadequately understood. This research sought to address that lack of understanding. The aim of the research was to examine the nature of the day-to-day management activities in SMSSCHI to refine our current understanding of such schools. Research questions focused on the nature of the day-to-day management; the organisational challenges; the relationships between the SMSSCHI and stakeholders including, the private sector, parents and the Ghana Education Service (GES); the way educational policies influence the management of SMSSCHI; and the boundary issues in the day-to-day management of SSMCHI in Ghana. The research began with an analysis of the relevant literature. The empirical research was in two phases: Phase 1 involved visits to seven out of the 12 SMSSCHI in Ghana to understand day-to-day management practices. Phase 2 explored the relationships between schools and stakeholders in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI in three schools. The data were analysed using the planning, organising, staffing, coordinating, reporting, budgeting (POSDCoRB) framework. The key findings were that day-to-day management practices were homogenous across study schools. This homogeneity stemmed from the use of centralized planning emanating from the GES to ensure conformity to set policies. This practice led to a limited adoption of strategic plans to address local needs. Organisational boundary issues emerged as significant in relation to the involvement of stakeholders in school management portrayed by the profound influence of the GES and very minimal involvement of other stakeholders as enshrined in the decentralisation policy of the GES. Societal conceptions of disability and the location of special schools influenced stakeholders' involvement in school management. The implications of the findings for policy and practice are discussed.

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EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Boundary:

The boundary describes ‘a point of entry for all of the systems inputs, members, materials, information, and so on. It is also the point where the organisation meets its environment, including those constituents and significant others who formulate impressions and views of what occur within the organisation’s conversion process’ (Czander, 1993; p.204).

For this study, the boundary describes the point where stakeholders may be included or excluded in the decision-making that propels the day-to-day management of study schools.

CHI:

A child with hearing impairment (CHI) describes any child between the ages of four and 16 years who has been diagnosed with hearing impairment and is enrolled in any of the 12 state-maintained special schools in Ghana.

SMSSCHI:

State-maintained special school for children with hearing impairment as a term refers to the segregated boarding schools for children with hearing impairment in Ghana. At the time of data collection, there were 12 of such schools scattered along the length and breadth of the country. These schools are largely financed by the central government through a special capitation.

DISABILITY:

A disability according to the WHO is an umbrella term that describes the ‘impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions’. Impairment is linked to a problem in body function or structure, an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by the individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual involvement in life situations. A disability is also described in physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, developmental terms or some combination of these.

Drawing from the WHO definition, disability is a complex phenomenon which reflects the interaction between the features of a person’s body and features of the society in which one lives. The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), defines disability as the outcome of the interaction between a person with impairment and the environmental and attitudinal barriers one may face.

HEARING IMPAIRMENT:

Hearing impairment is a broad term used to describe the loss of hearing in one or both ears. There are different levels of hearing impairment: Hearing impairment refers to complete or partial loss of the ability to hear from one or both ears. The level of impairment can be mild, moderate, severe or profound. Another preferred term is deafness which is now more socially acceptable to people with the condition.

DAY-TO-DAY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT:

A term which describes the operationalisation of the functions needed for managing the school. The POSDCoRB model which features the planning, organising, staffing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting functions of management is used to discuss day-to-day school management.

PWD:

A person with disabilities may be described as one who has an impairment. Such impairments may be evident in the sensory or cognitive or developmental features as well as varied types of chronic conditions of the individual.

SENCO:

The Special Education Needs Coordinator is a teacher with specialist training in SEN either of diploma or degree status. Such teachers are stationed at the District Directorate of Education to provide specialist educational programmes for children with special education needs within an educational district.

SEN:

SEN describes the situation where some children may find it more difficult to cope with the demands of the everyday classroom as a result of a disability. In Ghana, the bulk of available help for children with SEN are provided in segregated schools. In conformity to international mandates and conventions that has been signed. Moves are increasingly being made to shift to mainstreaming in the provision of SEN.

ABBREVIATIONS

BECE-Basic Education Certificate in Education

CREATE- Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity

CWD- Child (ren) with disabilities

EFA-Education for All

FCUBE- Free Compulsory Basic Education

GES- Ghana Education Service

GOG-Government of Ghana

JHS- Junior High School

MDG-Millennium Development Goal

MOE-Ministry of Education

MOESS-Ministry of Education Science and Sports

MOEYS- Ministry of Education Youth and Sports

NGO- Non-Governmental Organisation

PTA-Parent Teacher Association

SHS- Senior High School

TLM - Teaching and Learning Materials

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This initial chapter places my study within the field of educational leadership and management, and utilises the findings from some international and local studies on the management of special education to build a justification for this research. In addition, the problem statement, aims and research questions, the purpose of the study and the significance of the study are discussed. Finally, the chapters that make up the thesis are described.

Educational Provisions for Children with Disabilities in Ghana

Special Education Needs (SEN) has been the subject of debate in academic and social circles since the fifteenth century. By the twenty-first century, various international initiatives had been advocated for and implemented to ensure the welfare of people with disabilities (PWDs) internationally and nationally. Some of such initiatives include the Jomtien Declaration of Education for All (1990); The Salamanca Declaration (1994); the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) among others. The Salamanca Declaration seeks to cater for the needs of SEN within the set objectives outlined in the goals of Education for All (EFA).

Internationally, the debate on the most appropriate provision of special education has shifted towards mainstreaming as a result of the Salamanca Declaration. However, experts agree that mainstreaming might not be beneficial for all children with disabilities (CWDs), as such a segregated residential provision was the preferred option. Morris, Albert and Ward (2002), conducted research to investigate the contrasting views of local authorities and parents on residential school placements in the UK. Their literature search pointed to a lack of research on national numbers, the needs of children in residential provisions or children's experiences of living away from home (Pathak & Fletcher-Campbell, 1995; Utting, 1997, quoted by Morris, J., Abbott, D., & Ward, L., 2002). They also suggested that in their review of the literature on education and care away from home, the literature revealed that there was:

... very little mention of disabled children within the childcare literature so that this group is in some ways "invisible" ... this represents a significant gap in the knowledge needed to plan services appropriately (Borland, Pearson, Hill, Tisdall & Bloomfield, 1998, p.35, quoted in Morris, J., Abbott, D., & Ward, L., 2002, p.2).

The researchers then set out to identify why children were enrolled in residential provisions and the experiences they had in such schools. Using a multi-method approach including documentary analyses, qualitative semi-structured interviews with senior managers in education and social services to collect data, the researchers' findings illustrated the ambivalence parents faced

in choosing residential educational provisions for CWDs. The team concluded that, for the majority of parents, a residential school placement for their child was not a preferred option, and the decision to pursue this was very difficult to take. Both parents and some disabled young people cited bad experiences in local special and mainstream schools as one of the main reasons for considering residential schools, along with inadequate support for families in meeting their child's needs. Local education and social services management were generally opposed to residential provision. My submission is, if a state like the United Kingdom which offers all opportunities for quality special education still advocates special provisions for some CWDs, then the existence of residential educational provisions for CWDs (in Ghana) is justifiable. Again, this search of the literature points to gaps in the information regarding CWDs which need to be filled. This identified challenge regarding SEN in a developed country, such as the UK is particularly precarious in a small, developing country like Ghana; hence, the need for my study.

Locally on the Ghanaian scene, some studies conducted in special education from 2000 to 2007 indicate that, to a large extent, some provisions for people with disabilities (PWDs) were available. The resounding agreement in these studies, however, suggests that these provisions are both inadequate and inappropriate in addressing the educational needs of CWDs (Agbenyega, 2002; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988).

One major research study that informs my work is that of Casely-Hayford (2002). She carried out a multi-method situational analysis of SEN in Ghana, mainly reviewing documentation and interviewing the key management staff from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), SEN schools, Special

Education Division (SpEd) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the university sector. The respondents participated in a one-day consultative workshop and responded to a questionnaire. Data were later subjected to a qualitative analysis. Issues probed through the questionnaire included; [a] achievements of SEN [b] demand and supply of educational support to CWDs [c] problems and institutional challenges to programming and [d] interventions to improve performance. She then concluded that persons with disabilities (PWDs) are just emerging as a visible part of the population with equal human rights, part of which demanded education. Casely-Hayford further noted that the acute shortage of evidenced-based research meant that critical issues in SEN provisions were largely unaddressed. This observation provides a major impetus for this study. Of interest was a part of her discussion which pointed out that there was a: "...critical problem with the teaching of children with hearing impairments" (Casely-Hayford, 2002, p.4).

While the Casely-Hayford study provides a comprehensive examination of the state of SEN in the 2000s in Ghana, the methodology of inviting stakeholders for a one-day conference for me, raises problems with the richness of the obtained data being gathered out of context and having the likelihood of being misrepresented. Again, her study was a broad, government-commissioned work which sought to examine the SEN provision in the country as a whole. The approach does not highlight the unique factors that account for the state of the individual branches under SEN. This study focuses on state maintained special schools for children with hearing impairment (SMSSCHI) to describe the unique issues in the state of the day-

to-day management of such schools and how these issues potentially moderate the quality of education that CHI access.

One other impetus for this study is displayed in a question that my colleagues expressed whenever I argued the need for research into the management of special education. The question continuously posed to me was; “why the need?” Special schools were part of the general educational system of the country and thus needed no differentiated management approach. I, on the other hand, held a different view. Research has highlighted the credence in the call for differentiated management practice in schools. Making the case for this point of view, Duke, Tucker, Salmonowicz and Levy (2007) reported on their study into variations and similarities in the principals’ perceptions of the conditions that must be addressed in high-poverty, low-achieving schools in America. The study adopted an inductive approach through interviewing the principals to express their perception of factors that could account for inadequate student achievements. The team from their findings indicated that there was some agreement in the perceived factors which substantiated generic training for school heads. The occurrence of some differences also substantiated differentiated training for school heads in different organisational leadership to address different organisational contextual needs if the educational sector is to improve on school outcomes. This finding ties in with my quest for examining the unique management practices in SMSSCHI to help education to realise set goals.

Education is said to form the basis for the development of the human resource development to accelerate national development (Mba, 2005). In the drive to help developing nations eradicate poverty and achieve national

development, the United Nations has promulgated various strategies. One major strategy for poverty alleviation is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In response to the mandates of the MDGs, Ghana designed the Ghana poverty reduction strategy (GPRS 1 & 2), operationalised in two phases. Writing on the challenges in developing countries in including disabled children in education, Croft (2010) quotes Albert, Dube and Riis-Hansen (2005) and observes that one major critic of the MDGs was that they did not mention disability issues. This was a critical oversight and if developing nations like Ghana hope to harness the strengths of the MDGs and GPRS 1 & 2 to grow out of poverty and achieve middle income status by 2015, issues of disability cannot be ignored. Indeed, the national director for the Ghana National Association of the Blind notes that: “as the world strives to achieve the MDGs it is important that disability is not treated as a leftover” (Asamo, n.d., p.1).

Similarly, it is increasingly being acknowledged that the realisation of the MDGs will be difficult to achieve without the inclusion of PWDs in education given the recognition of the close links between disability, lack of education and poverty (United Nations General Secretary, 2007). The provision of education for CWDs in every form should receive equal examination as mainstream education as Ghana now shifts focus from access issues in education to quality issues in education provision.

A related strategy for poverty alleviation is the Education for All (EFA) which advocates the inclusion of all children in education by the year 2015. One area the EFA focuses on is the elimination of barriers to participation in quality basic education for marginalized groups (UNESCO, 2010) including

people with disabilities (PWDs). Croft (2010) suggests that the realization of the goals for the various poverty reduction strategies remain a distant dream as millions of children remain out of school. National enrolment figures portray a picture of many children between the ages of 6 to 14 years being out of school (refer to Appendix A). As at the 2004 to 2005 academic year, the total population of children aged 6 to 14 years out of school was estimated to be 4.96 million at the national level (MOEYS, 2005). Enrolment for children aged 6 to 14 in primary and Junior Secondary School for the same period was estimated to be 2.53 million. This display indicates that about 2.43 million children were out of school. Some have either never enrolled in school or dropped out at some point, a trend that has persisted over the years. In a Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) report edited by Lewin (2007), establishing areas of exclusion during a country-wide study into educational provisions in Ghana in 2007 identifies a model for exclusion in zones. According to the model, children out of school may have been excluded in zone 1 (never having been enrolled), zone 2 (having dropped out of primary school) or zone 3 (in primary school but with poor achievement and/or attendance and therefore at risk of dropping out before completing the primary cycle). CWDs can be numbered among the children identified in these zones.

Croft (2010) notes from her discussion on disability in developing nations that, one striking feature of the incidence for disability was the difficulty of establishing reliable figures to measure the magnitude of occurrence. Existing data were described as being “remarkably weak” (UNESCO, 2004). This picture is corroborated by Ms. Elizabeth Ohene, the then Minister for Tertiary

Education with oversight responsibilities for Special Education, who revealed that, at the time, there were only 5,000 children and youth with disabilities representing six percent of the total population of children with disabilities in educational institutions and undergoing training in various special schools. Marking the national day for disability in Ghana in 2006, she intimated that a WHO report in 2001 following the 2000 Census put the total number of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the country at about two million, out of which between 600,000 and 800,000 children of school-going age were not in school (Ohene, 2006). Croft asserts among other things that many disabled children around the world are denied access to basic education. While the statement by Ohene (2006) suggests that most disabled children in Ghana were out of school, what happens to the six percent who make it to school? What quality of education do they access? How were the educational provisions for CWDS managed? These questions served to ground the design of this current research. This current study explores the enactment of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI through the experiences of school management committee (SMCs) and stakeholders including parents, academics, members of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and alumni. With a better understanding of the management of educational provisions that children with hearing impairment access, the nation could improve on current practices and promote the educational development of the hearing impaired child for inclusion in further education and ultimately, the world of work. Then as a people we would have collectively attained the mandates of the “Child Cannot Wait” (1992) that advocates the rights of all children in the country.

The Research Setting

The setting for this study is Ghana, a country which lies on the west coast of Africa (refer to Appendix B for country map). In 1957, it became the first African nation south of the Sahara to attain independence from its colonial masters. The country covers an area of 92,000 square miles, which is approximately the same size as England and, in 2005, its population was estimated to be 21 million (GOG, 2007).

The study sought to explore the day-to-day management of special needs schools in Ghana with particular emphasis on state maintained special schools for children with hearing impairment (SMSSCHI). At the time of the data collection, the state-maintained educational provision for children with hearing impairment (CHI) was located in 12 residential settings, mostly in the regional capitals, or in special units attached to mainstream schools in large towns. This number has increased to 14 as at the time of writing up, some private schools have been taken over by the state.

One challenge facing the effective implementation of various initiatives that are designed to cater for children within which the provisions of special education is placed has been identified as a lack of credible and sustainable statistics (UNESCO, 2004; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Gadagbui, 2002). To ascertain issues for myself, my study was designed in two phases. Phase 1 of the field work was designed to give me an idea of the nature of school management in SMSSCHI. Seven out of these schools were visited during the third term of the 2006/2007 academic year. The basis for this choice, drawn from the views of Patton (1990), was that a purposive selection of these research sites enabled me to discover, understand and gain insight into the

management of SMSSCHI in Ghana. A detailed discussion of the setting is provided in the methodology chapter. Phase 2 of the study further explored the management of study schools in three out of the seven schools visited during Phase 1. The smaller number of study sites was to accommodate a deeper probing of the research mandates with the introduction of other respondents as well as the use of other qualitative measures. A detailed explanation of the procedures for the two phases is provided in Chapters Four and Five of this report.

The Problem

Education has been recognized to be the basis for economic progress and the overall development of a nation. Some benefits that accrue from education include improved health and sanitation awareness, reduction in mother and infant mortality, reduced unemployment and crime culminating in economic and political progress in a country. The inclusion of PWDs in the educational system of a country was beneficial not only for the individual but for the entire society. To attain these benefits, successive governments have made several efforts to provide universal basic education for the Ghanaian society including special education for PWDs.

From World Bank estimates, people with special needs constitute as much as a fifth of the world's poorest people (Elwan, 1999). Individuals, who are deaf, blind, dumb or physically disadvantaged, especially in low income countries, therefore constitute part of the estimated 1.3 billion living on less than \$1 per day (Inclusion International, 2005). Yeo and Moore (2003) agree that poverty is both a cause and consequence of impairment and disability. Disabled children are therefore more likely to lack access to quality education

at all levels of the school system. This situation is no different in Ghana. For instance, Ofori-Addo (1995), in writing on the initiatives that have been undertaken to cater for the welfare of people with special needs in Ghana from the 1960s, indicates in his background discussion of the United Nation's Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report (1992) that Ghana was among the poorest countries in the world. According to him, Ghana was ranked 119th out of 160 countries, with 6.7 million of its 15 million people living below the poverty line. Some 5.8 million people had no access to health services, and there were 10.3 million without access to sanitation and 6.5 million without access to water (1990 figures).

In Ghana, special schools provide education for children with special needs. However, if transitions from the basic to higher levels of education and the representation of its graduates in the world of work are used as indices of the quality of its programmes, the conclusion can be reached that there are shortfalls in the education provided. Studies conducted by Gadagbui (2002) indicated that there has been a steady decline in the BECE results for deaf children between 1996 and 1998, a situation which has become progressively worse by 2006. This arguably suggests some dissonance in the management of these schools. This has implications for leadership and management practice within special schools. Yet, in Ghana, very little attention has been paid to management and leadership issues in special needs education when it comes to quality education policy formulation and implementation.

In another vein, the role of management and leadership in promoting quality education is considered as critical. Rayner and Hallam (2000) suggest that this role is a widely acknowledged feature when an assessment of the

nature and quality of education is being undertaken. This acknowledgement was also recognised in Ghana when management was set as one of the targets for Ghana's current educational reform outlined in the Free, Compulsory, Universal, Basic, Education (FCUBE) and implemented in 1996. Since then, various studies have been undertaken to examine the implementation of the demands or tenets of the reform across the educational sector. However, very little attention has been paid to the management of special schools within the country, a fact which goes contrary to what Rayner and Hallam (2000) affirm as: "the role of leadership and management in determining the nature and quality of education at all levels is widely acknowledged" (p.1). The apparent gaps in the literature and its links to noticeable inadequacies in school management practices as reflected in poor school outcomes have been the impetus for the study. This study is undertaken to explore the day-to-day management issues that model the management of state-maintained special schools for children with hearing impairment in Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the day-to-day management activities in SMSSCHI in Ghana as a means of providing data to assist in refining our current understanding of the provision of educational provisions for CHI in Ghana. The study was designed to analyse the day-to-day management activities that took place in SSMCHI with the POSDCoRB model as well as how some of the intervening factors like policies and boundary issues moderated management practice.

Research Aims and Questions

The study seeks to understand the nature of the day-to-day management practices that SMSSCHI employ in their provision of basic education. The experiences of school heads, assistant school heads, heads of department, alumni, academics in SEN, parents and some non-governmental agencies are utilised to answer research questions.

Due to inadequacies and non-agreement regarding the available statistics on special education in Ghana, the first phase of my work involved visits to seven of the twelve schools to gain insights into the current nature of the day-to-day management in SMSSCHI. The second phase focused on specific emerging management issues from the data obtained in Phase 1. Research questions were grouped into two parts to reflect these phases as follows.

For Phase 1, the aim was to examine the nature of the day-to-day management in SMSSCHI.

1. What is the nature of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI in Ghana, as described by POSDCoRB?
2. What are the organisational challenges in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI in Ghana?
3. What is the state of the relationship between the SMSSCHI and community-based organisations?
4. What is the nature of the relationships between SMSSCHI and the private sector?
5. What is the nature of the relationships between SMSSCHI and the GES?

For Phase 2, the aim was to explore particular aspects of the management of SMSSCHI and their implications for the quality of education for CHI in Ghana.

6. What educational policies influence the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana?
7. What are the boundary issues in the day-to-day management of SSMCHI in Ghana?

Significance of the Study

Many studies have been conducted on education access and quality in Ghana (Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Gadagbui, 2002). Very few have deeply explored management issues in the basic schools within SEN field and very few have based their studies on qualitative data. This study departs from previous studies by exploring management practices within SEN settings, bringing in the voice of stakeholders to illuminate the understandings of how education is managed.

It is anticipated that the findings of the study will be significant for practice, practitioners and research. First, in terms of practice, whilst I do not make a claim that my work should have a direct impact on policy, I anticipate that the findings from the study will provide evidence for school management teams to initiate some reflection on their practice and, possibly, subsequent change in practice, substantiate the need for differentiated management practices in exceptional settings in education, and confirm the usefulness of management in addition to the leadership in achieving success in schools as organisations. It is also my hope that this study will generate debate among educational practitioners and advocacy groups on the need to examine and

define management practices in special education and thus ensure that the CHI access the full benefit of educational provisions.

Second, for the research, the data findings are expected to extend the current literature on special education in Ghana. In addition, the findings would provide evidence to back up the need for further investigation into management issues in SEN settings, provide evidence for the use of classical management models, such as the POSDCoRB in examining schools as organisations, and contribute to the existing empirical and theoretical knowledge by providing evidence to support the use of the POSDCoRB and the open systems as a combined paradigm in analysing management in schools as organisations. The findings from the study, apart from filling the gaps in the literature, will provide evidence that the analytical framework demonstrates an amalgamation of different models as an alternative lens to the current models that examine phenomena in educational settings, enabling an enriched and comprehensive data set to provide an understanding of the field of SEN. This would contribute to the theory on the ways of understanding the school as an organisation as well as facilitate an understanding of SEN settings and indeed the institutions that cater for exceptionality in any sense.

Third, the study will be of benefit to policymakers in the state decision-making machinery as it responds to the increased advocacy for improved educational opportunities for children with hearing impairment (CHI). For educational management practitioners, it is anticipated that the data findings will generate debate among educational practitioners and advocacy groups about the need to examine and define management practices in special education and thus ensure that children with disabilities, including CHI, access

the full benefit of educational provisions. For practitioners and researchers in SEN on the international and local scene, the findings from this study documents information that can inform their understanding of the study area which they can factor into their policy formulation and implementation. For developing countries that are generating their own literature on SEN and indeed on educational management, this study contributes a perspective that will help to enrich the current information in the field.

The Chapters

The thesis is divided into nine chapters. Chapter 1, the initial chapter introduces the study. A discussion of some studies that explains the impetus for the study, research aims and questions, statement of the problem, and the purpose and significance of the study, the delimitations and limitations of the study as well as a definition of the terms and the study outline are also discussed in this first chapter.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on the complex understandings in disability and hearing impairment and how these understandings moderate educational provisions for children with hearing impairment (CHI). The chapter traces the historical development of special education in Ghana. The chapter provides background information on special education as well as the management challenges identified in previous studies to explain the setting within which the study was contextualized. Additionally, the chapter examines educational reforms and policies introduced by the government to enhance access to basic education.

Chapter 3 details the literature on the conceptual analytical framework that informed the collection and analysis of the data to answer my research

questions for Phase 1 and 2. The discussion looked at the strengths and weaknesses of the POSDCoRB framework as well as the rationale for its adoption within the study. A discussion of the boundary theory and its use is also dilated on.

Chapter 4 presents the details and the rationale of the research methodology that influenced my choices for Phases 1. It discusses a brief synopsis of the literature on the research paradigm, research methods, sample and sample inclusion techniques, data gathering and analysing tools, as well as the underpinning ethical considerations.

The data for Phase 1 is presented in Chapter 5. Data is derived from the voices of SMC members, observations and document review to describe the nature of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. The chapter reports on the data obtained from the cross-analysis of the individual data from the various school sites used for the study in Phase 1. The presentation draws on data from the interviews and observations as well as data from documents related to the study objectives.

Chapter 6 is a discussion of the design of the study for Phase 2. It follows the structure outlined in Chapter 4. The sample and sampling techniques and rationale are provided here.

Chapter 7 presents the data from the Phase 2 data collection process. It highlights the pertinent issues in the policy arena that moderates the practice of SEN in the country. Boundary issues in the physical, mental and social dimensions of the day-to-day school management are described in the chapter.

Chapter 8 is concerned with analysis and discussion of the findings as interrogated with the literature. The chapter deals with an application of the

POSDCoRB model to assess the management of SMSSCHI as well as the challenges that the management faced in their management practice in response to research questions 1 and 2. The presentation also looks at the relationships that the schools maintained with some identified stakeholders in their environment to address research questions 3, 4 and 5. Additionally, the policy arena data related to special education management are examined in response to research question 6. The final section of the chapter deals with the boundary management issues in school management and is a response to research question 7.

Finally, Chapter 9 concludes the study report and presents the implications. The chapter elaborates on a summary of findings, conclusions and a critical evaluation of my research assumptions and the obtained data, drawing on the data collection and analysis processes. Suggestions for practice, policy formulation and future research conclude the research report.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STUDY CONTEXT

Overview

This chapter is devoted to a presentation on the SEN educational system in Ghana, setting the context for the study. The discussion begins with a presentation of the guiding questions behind the literature review. These lines of questioning place the basic assumptions of the study within the larger literature base (Creswell, 2007; Silverman, 2006).

The chapter further interrogates the complex understandings in disability generally, and hearing impairment specifically, and how such understandings penetrate educational provisions for children with hearing impairment (CHI). The chapter traces the transitions in the special educational sector from the time of its inception in the country till the time of the study. It also examines relevant literature on the policies that moderate the practice of SEN in Ghana and concludes with an examination of the incidence of boundary theory in school management.

Literature Review Questions

A number of questions informed the review. They were: in the education of the CHI what are the varied understandings that permeate practice? What are the socio-cultural perspectives on hearing impairment? How is disability conceptualised? How does this conceptualisation influence SEN delivery?

Other parts of the literature review were guided by other questions including; what is the incidence of disability in Ghana? How are residential special schools managed? What has been the trend in special educational provisions from the time of its inception until the time of the study? How are special schools managed? What are the policies that drive SEN? What are the boundary issues in the day-to-day management of SEN settings? These questions are addressed in this chapter in five sections. Section 1 presents a discussion of the varied themes that permeate the education of CHI with an emphasis on the conceptualisation of disability and the management of special residential schools. Section 2 analyses how the Ghanaian SEN sector has evolved providing an understanding of the context for this study. Section 3 examines the management of schools in developing nations like Ghana. Section 4 analyses how schools share links with stakeholders in their environments. Finally, section 5 explores a number of intervening factors in school management.

The Education of Children with Hearing Impairment

For the educational leader and manager, some issues that present interesting demands in the education of the CHI include the management of hearing loss to maximize opportunities for teaching and learning. This management is moderated with various understandings that are derived first, from conceptualising disability from international and local models and then the myriad demands from conceptualising hearing loss. These moderating understandings are further explored in the following subsections.

Education has been described as the most powerful tool to help achieve the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) including the first MDG goal of

poverty eradication (Oduro, Dachi, Fertig & Rarieya, 2008). Governments across developing contexts, including that of Ghana have assigned added importance to the provision of an enhanced education for their populace. As Ghana strives to achieve the mandates of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), various strategies designed and implemented include those that encourage increasing access to schooling to those that promote issues of quality to achieve universal primary education or UPE (Anthony, 2009; Oduro, Dachi, Fertig & Rarieya, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007).

Given the close link observed between poverty and disability, the inclusion of people with disabilities (PWDs) in education is highly desirable. Indeed, a DFID practice paper (n.d.), quoting the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the Marginalized; observes that: “children with disabilities (CWDs) remain one of the main groups being widely excluded from quality education. Disability is recognized as one of the least visible yet most potent factors in educational marginalisation” (DFID, n. d., p.1). This marginalisation reflects the major critic against the MDGs’ inability to succinctly refer to disability in its pronouncements (see for example; Asamo, n. d.; Croft, 2010). Asamo, the National Director for the Ghana National Association of the Blind observes that: “as the world strives to achieve the MDGs it is important that disability is not treated as a leftover” (Asamo, n. d., p.1).

The provision of educational opportunity for disabled children in a country including children with hearing impairment (CHI) is moderated by the understandings that society ascribes to the phenomenon of disability. It will

be useful to explore the education of CHI from an in-depth examination of; 1) how disability is conceptualised in international and local models; 2) how deafness and its attendant parameters are determined and then finally an examination of the unique educational needs of CHI. These issues are discussed next.

Conceptualising disability

Special education needs (SEN) have attained a prominent position both internationally and locally in the discourse on education and social justice. Examples of various international initiatives which have sought to pursue the welfare of people with disabilities are: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006); Salamanca Declaration (1994); Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993). The major international policy that played a prominent part in providing the base framework for SEN in Ghana was the Salamanca Declaration (1994). The Salamanca Declaration uniquely articulated the rights of people with disabilities (PWDs) and the need for government and civil society to progressively explore avenues for the inclusion of PWDs in national life. Inclusion as a strategy was expected to reduce poverty and accelerate the pace of moving Ghana to middle income status. The design of local SEN policies reflected the mandates of international policies projected to accelerate development and the realisation of international and local conventions including the Education for All (EFA) mandate, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS). In Ghana, all these initiatives have been embraced and have become the centre of an on-

going national discourse on the current status of persons with disabilities (Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002).

While disability issues are recognised in Ghana, determining the parameters for the concept of disability, however, has not been extensively addressed. Indeed, over time, there has been a very animated discourse regarding the definition of disability as questions of status and identity are at the very heart of any policy on disability. In Ghana, the legislation that gives legal recognition to disability was promulgated in 2006 after a lengthy and protracted advocacy process to compel the government. Its interpretation and implementation are still at the definition stage. Arguably, this act was influenced by particular philosophies, a discussion of which follows next.

Understanding Disability: Global Models

According to the United Nations Standard Rules on the equalization of Opportunities for Persons with disabilities, (UNESCO, 1994), the concept of disability summarises a great number of different functional limitations occurring in any population, in any country of the world. People may be disabled by a physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, a medical condition or mental illness. Such impairments, conditions or illnesses may be permanent or transitory in nature.

Various international models have been developed to describe how disability is conceptualised in society. Societal understanding and acceptance of disability issues are largely influenced by official policies and definitions. The model that a government uses to guide the national definition of disability goes a long way to determine the degree of participation of PWDs in the social

and economic life of their communities. Five of these models that explain disability as summarised by Kaplan (2008; p.1) are presented next:

1. The *moral model* connects disability to some breach of the moral code of society by the family or a member. People may link disability to the effect or end result of sin or impurity.
2. The *medical model* regards disability as a medical condition or sickness or defect which can be 'corrected' or 'fixed' through medical intervention to return the person to some level of 'normalcy'. Where this cure is not possible, the individual is banned from society and placed in an institution.
3. The *rehabilitation model* is an offshoot of the medical model which regards disability as a defect which can be fixed by rehabilitation professionals or by other helping professionals.
4. The *charity model* is also described as *pity model*. It views PWDs as victims, incapable of helping themselves and needing support and charity to survive.
5. The *disability or social model* diverts from the other models that focus on the physical characteristics of the individual. It views disability as a social construct which places responsibility for disability on society. For this model, disability is interpreted as a social construction similar to the social construction of gender and racialism. Drawing from the feisty views on disability by a prominent activist in disability named Oliver, Barnes, Oliver and Barton (2002) suggest that in the broadest sense the social model is nothing more or less dramatic than a concerted shift away from an

emphasis on individual impairments as the cause of disability. They further assert that the model rather reflects the way in which physical, cultural and social environments exclude or disadvantage certain categories of people, namely, people labelled disabled. The social model stresses that people were disabled based on how society either included or excluded them from mainstream life.

Understanding Disabilities: Local Models

In the predominant SEN discourse around the world, the theory of choice to explain disability in times past was the medical model. Within this model, in the opinion of able-bodied society, people with disabilities were seen as possessing some deficits in their physical and psychological make-up and therefore needed medical intervention to enable them cope with the demands of everyday life. In line with the medical model, segregated or residential settings were established for children with hearing impairment in each of ten regions in Ghana, with some regions having more than one special school.

In more recent times, concerns have been raised in society about the location of educational provisions for PWDs in special or mainstream settings, due to the limited involvement of parents in both the assessment procedures and in general decision making about children with disabilities (Ofori-Addo, 1995). Again, the continued provision of SEN in special schools was contrary to the mandates of international convention. According to Avoke (2002), the residential special school model of providing education for children with disabilities relieved parents of the pressure and stress of parenting a child with disabilities. In Ghana, boarding school education is considered prestigious and Avoke (2002) questioned whether this perception carried over to the practice

of residential segregated schools for such a group of Ghanaian children. The choice of the special school education model, in his view, was not an open one for parents as alternatives were lacking.

With time, advocacy from international and local stakeholders has led to new trends in understanding disability. It is becoming increasingly popular in Ghana to employ the disability or social model to understand disability and ultimately the services that society is willing and able to make available for people with disabilities PWDs (Ocloo, 2003; Agbenyega, 2002; Avoke, 2002).

Nevertheless, Ocloo (2003) has argued that the changes in philosophy that explained disability did not go along with a change in the prevailing negative societal perception of people with disabilities. Indeed, he asserts that locating special schools on the outskirts of towns served to minimize contact with locals. Religious and superstitious explanations of disability brought about a resistance from the people in communities in accepting PWDs. Likewise, Avoke (2002), suggests that it is difficult to discover the true motives behind the establishment of residential schools for children with disabilities. In many cases, society held negative perceptions about people with disabilities, considering them to be socially abhorrent (Ocloo, 2003; Agbenyega, 2002).

In this study, the two major models which have influenced the design were the medical and disability or social models. The choice of the medical model was a given in that the practice of SEN in Ghana at the time of data collection was largely moderated with the understandings from the model. The application of the model guided the practice of residential educational provision for PWDs in the country. In reflection of a move towards global trends, the incidence of Ghana's ratifying various international conventions on

disability suggested that in theory, the country was moving towards the use of the social model to moderate SEN practice. The study therefore adopted the social model to explain disability and SEN practice in the country.

Theories That Explain Disability in Ghana

Two theories guiding the practice of special education in Ghana have been identified as the Gestalt Theory and Lewin's personality theory (Anson-Yevu, 1988). Gestalt theory asserts that, education should aim at utilizing a holistic approach to learning, ensuring that all the senses are actively engaged during the learning process. Lewin's personality theory also suggests that every learning experience should take into cognizance the total personality of the individual learner. To this end, educational experiences should be designed to suit the total personality of the learner including any special education need. By the 2000s, the theoretical basis for the practice of special education had expanded to include the choice of other models including the medical or social models (explanations follow later in the discussion) to conceptualise disability and thus the choice of services to be accorded to people with disabilities (Avoke, 2002).

The Incidence of Disability in Ghana

Chronicling the incidence of disability in Ghana is fraught with problems as there is no official database to inform such an activity. Most of the major reports on research done to assess the SEN situation in the country arrive at the same conclusion of inadequate data (Casely-Hayford, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988). Whatever information that is available has to be interpreted with caution, as there is a high incidence of under reporting, especially in rural areas where record keeping is particularly problematic. The United Nations

(UN, 2012) estimates, that about 10% -12% of any given population in developing countries experience some form of disability. The Special Education Division (SpED) of the GES indicated that by 2001, between 20%-25% of children in mainstream schools experienced some form of disability. Some of these disabilities were not readily discernable but could possibly account for the poor performance of some children in mainstream schools (Special Education Division, 2001). The incidence of disability, as indicated by PWDs in basic education, as at 2010 is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Schools Offering SEN Provisions

Institution	No. of schools	Male	Female	Total
Schools for the Deaf	13	1348	839	2187
Schools for the Blind	2	332	152	484
Schools for the Mentally Handicapped	2	432	237	669
Schools for the Deaf-Blind	1	22	-	22
Total		2134	1228	3362

Source: Special Education Division (2010)

Having profiled the general description of disability as it pertains to Ghana, my discussion moves on to an exploration of hearing impairment and the various parameters that need to be understood for school management to offer the most appropriate educational opportunities.

Socio-cultural Perspectives on Hearing Impairment

Understanding hearing impairment (HI) presents an intriguing angle in the varying explanations that give meaning to the concept of hearing loss. Depending on the country and philosophy, “deafness” and

HI can mean different things. While hearing impairment covers all the varying degrees of hearing loss (mild, moderate and severe), deafness refers to a complete loss in one or both ears (World Health Organisation, 2007) completely missing out on mild and moderate hearing loss referred to as “hard-of-hearing”.

To some people, deafness refers to a hearing loss in one or both ears and represents a functional deficiency in the person of the individual and as such the disability must be “diagnosed” and possibly fixed. People who explain hearing loss with this understanding call such people “*deaf*” (Zapfen, 1998, p.5) and the communication mode of choice is oralism (this concept is explored further in the chapter). Other people see the deaf as a linguistic minority and see them as “different”, such as society ascribes to the difference presented by race or gender, a difference which does not connote inferiority in any sense. People with such orientations are termed as “*Deaf*” (Zapfen, 1998, p.5). According to the World Federation for the Deaf (WFD, 2012):

The term ‘Deaf people’ includes a wide spectrum of people with hearing differences from moderate to profound, from various backgrounds, races, ages, creeds, ethnicities, and philosophies and with different levels of linguistic variables (p.1).

Proponents further assert that Deaf people are “*identified*” as opposed to “*diagnosed*” in this model. Deaf people communicate with a different language and society should recognize their right to communicate in sign language and make room for their culture (Zapfen, 1998, p. 6). For the

educational manager, these are some of the underlying concepts that must be understood to facilitate a better provision of teaching and learning experiences within the school environment. Some of the educational underpinnings of HI are discussed next.

Conceptualising Hearing Impairment

Hearing impairment (HI) as a phenomenon is fraught with emotion and passion and its conceptualisation reflects the complexities associated with the disability. As a more socially acceptable term, hearing impairment refers to an umbrella term that describes the varying levels of hearing loss or more commonly termed deafness.

The WHO (2007) estimates that by 2005, about 278 million people with moderate to profound hearing loss with about 80% of them living in low-to-middle-income countries can be found around the globe. The major causes of deafness have been identified to be associated with hereditary or preventable diseases like meningitis, measles, mumps and chronic ear infections as well as environmental factors like excessive noise and trauma from head or ear injury, ageing and side effects of some medication (WHO, 2007).

Determining Types of HI

Another aspect to the understanding of HI is concerned with the prevalent types. HI manifests in two main forms according to which part of the ear is affected. Conductive hearing loss or impairment describes the malfunctioning of the outer or inner ear and hampers the transmission of sounds to the brain (WHO, 2007). Such types of hearing loss can be helped with assistive devices like hearing aids. Sensori-neural hearing impairment describes the hearing loss caused by malfunction of the inner ear or the hearing nerve. This loss can be

helped with cochlear implants (WHO, 2007). Understanding the intricacies of hearing loss helps us to appreciate the relationships between hearing loss and communication experiences of the deaf child and their subsequent linkages to classroom processes and education as a whole (WHO, 2007).

Degree of Hearing Loss

The degree of hearing loss also impacts on the management of hearing loss. This loss may be in one ear (unilateral) or both ears (bilateral). The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2007):

estimates that globally the number of people with hearing loss, defined as a loss of more than 40 dB on the hearing loss scale (> 40 dB HL), has more than doubled from 120 million in 1995 to at least 278 million in 2005, thus making this condition the most prevalent sensory deficit in the population (p.1).

Hearing impairment within any given populace, then, can occur in varying degrees.

Unique Educational Needs of the CHI

The unique communication needs of the CHI are prominently evident in the communication gaps that results from the child's inability to pick language through everyday interactions. These communication needs are projected in many dimensions including the literacy, phonic awareness, the link between sight and sound (BECTA, 2000). These are especially crucial because writing or composing text (a critical component of all classroom processes) has its own difficulties for the deaf child (BECTA, 2000). Indeed, BECTA graphically suggests that: “ the average profoundly deaf adult has a reading

age of about 8 and so is debarred from many education and training courses” (p.1).

For the deaf child with minor or temporary hearing problems such as otitis media or glue ear, there is a constant struggle with: “reading and writing in primary school and not only fall behind but also suffer an enormous loss of confidence” (BECTA, 2000, p.1). The plight of the deaf in language acquisition for communication purposes in the classroom therefore ranges from not accessing information necessary for cognitive and academic achievement during their schooling years; to an inability to access training programmes that will qualify them for employment. These factors ultimately affect their self-confidence and self-worth and subsequently instil in them a sense of marginalisation or exclusion from society. Management of educational provisions for CHI therefore has to consciously locate the limiting circumstances that present unique challenges for them and provide opportunities for learning. This consciousness includes an awareness of the understandings ascribed to hearing impairment as a category under disability issues.

Classroom interactions are largely based on communication with a large percentage being speech. Research has shown that right from infancy, children pick up the intricate rules in the language of their parents (BECTA, 2000). These rules form the fundamental platform for language acquisition and cognitive activity in school (Gadagbui, 2002; Zapien, 1998). For the deaf child, such incidental learning opportunities are lost and have to be taught through conscious efforts, a frustrating and challenging procedure for the child as well as teachers and family. HI in children may thus delay development of

language and cognitive skills, which may subsequently hamper progress in school (Zapfen, 1998).

Making a decision on the best method for educating the deaf child presents many dimensions of choice to the educational leader and manager. First, one enduring debate in deaf education has always been the choice of either the oral (speech) or manual (sign) or mixed methods (total communication including cued speech) techniques for communication. The literature is rich with the trends and arguments that have influenced the debate over time (Avoke, 2002; Gadagbui, 2002; Zapfen, 1998). In the 21st century, individuals have a range of educational choices open to them. This choice is further complicated with options for special residential schools or mainstreamed day schools.

One other educational choice for the CHI is presented in making a choice of manual or oral methods. Over time, increased advocacy from the deaf community and allied agencies has shifted the argument in favour of manualism, as sign language is deemed to be the natural language of the deaf (Avoke, 2002; Gadagbui, 2002; Zapfen, 1998; Simeonsson, 1991). Providing education delivered through sign language requires resources which cannot be readily made available in everyday mainstream settings hence the incidence of residential schools. Such schools facilitate the pooling of resources such that a greater number of children can have access to specialized tuition offered by specially trained and qualified teachers and resource persons.

The Management of Residential Special Schools- International Models

Organising educational provisions for CHI as already indicated can be by differing modes including residential special schools or inclusive provisions in mainstream settings. For a long time, residential settings were the provisions

of choice to maximise the benefits of large numbers of children accessing expensive resources needed in the education of CHI. Exploring the literature to locate the research that has been carried out in the educational provisions for CHI existing in the UK and the U.S.A., some features of residential provisions for persons with disabilities were identified (see for example Paul, Cawson & Paton, 2004; Read & Harrison, 2002).

On the positive side of the audit sheet, residential settings for children with disabilities including deaf children offer some usefulness (DFID, n. d.; WFD, 2012; Zapien, 1998). Such schools are specially designed with the unique needs of the children in mind. Considering the fact that hearing impairment is a low incidence disability, aggregating resources in one facility to cater for a sizeable number of CHI minimizes costs and maximises returns to the utilisation of such facilities.

In addition, specially designed programmes offered by specially trained professionals including SEN teachers, and speech therapists cater to the unique needs of the children in contrast to mainstream settings where generalist teachers offer general problems which may not be accessible for the CHI (WFD, 2012; Zapien, 1998). A big plus for residential settings is the opportunities for CHI to interact with peers with similar conditions. Interactions for curricular and co-curricular activities like after-school clubs and student governance make room for confidence building and positive image projection. Zapien (1998) suggests that: “A child who lives in a locality where he is the only deaf child for miles in any direction is able to meet other deaf children” (Zapien, 1998, p.1).

Children with hearing impairment (CHI) who study in residential special schools have the opportunity to take part in some decision-making in their schools. The extended periods for social interaction after instructional time also offer opportunities for the acquisition of everyday social skills (see for example Paul, Cawson & Paton, 2004; Read & Harrison, 2002). According to a national forum for teachers and lecturers in the UK (Association of Teachers and Lecturers [ATL], 2008), critical benefits are accrued by stakeholders, notably pupils and indeed the whole school when children are encouraged to be part of school decision making. As such, children should be provided with opportunities for having a voice in the day-to-day running of the school. According to the association, opportunities for ensuring “pupil voice” could range from: “...inviting comments from pupils about particular issues to involving pupils in making decisions about school policies” (p.2). Other opportunities which could be provided include decision making about the acquisition and use of equipment and other resources, school rules, issues concerned with time tabling, school uniform and pastoral issues such as those connected with bullying and behaviour policies and practice.

Writing in the American context and in quoting Marschak, (1997), Zapien (1998) notes that where parents opt for special schools for their disabled child, opportunities for interaction with other equally disabled children generates friendships which are established for life. In addition, adult deaf people are available for role modelling and children get exposed to the cultural values and lifestyles including the acquisition and use of sign language of the Deaf community. Indeed, anecdotal evidence from some of the schools in Ghana suggests that CHI who graduate from the special schools tend to come back to

the schools as they find it challenging to communicate with their family and community members who do not have sign language.

The Management of Residential Special Schools- Local Models

The trajectory in the management of SEN provision in Ghana has been markedly one of residential models. Avoke (2002), tracing the transitions in SEN, notes that following from the first special school that opened in 1939, all other schools that were established were boarding or residential in nature.

As at the time of data collection there were 10 segregated special schools and two units attached to mainstream schools that provided schooling opportunities for CHI. These schools, located in the regional capitals catered for the educational needs of the children who lived in the region. The wide catchment area with long distances between schools and local communities meant that not all eligible CHI got into formal education (Avoke, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988). This situation was further exacerbated by parental reluctance to seek education for the CHI as a result of labelling and stigma (Agbenyaga, 2002).

The Ghana Education Service through the Special Education Division exercised authority in the management of all the schools. Onsite, schools have school management teams which are charged with overseeing the day-to-day functioning of schools. The status of this management is of a challenged one. There is a large volume of research in SEN to inform descriptions of what happens in mainstream schools (Avoke, 2002; Anthony, 2009). The education sector performance report published by the Ghana Education Service (GES) indicates that parents and the community were not widely involved in school

management as the long distances between schools and local communities limited interaction (MOESS,2008).

In Ghana, boarding schools have been associated with prestige and parents would make that choice to enhance educational opportunity for their children. There is a suggestion though, that for the CHI, the choice of the schools was not an open one as there were no alternatives and parents when the children are away could for a time at least forget about the stigma of having a disabled child (Agbenyega, 2002; Avoke, 2002). Such residential provisions have provided CHI opportunities with other children with similar disabilities and educational exposure that have opened up new worlds for them (Agbenyega, 2002).The situation of SEN in Ghana reflects an arena that is plagued with inadequate finances, institutional and attitudinal barriers, lack of focused legislation and policies to regulate practice. The MOESS sums up some of these barriers thus:

The education of children with disabilities is undervalued by families, there is a lack of awareness about the potential of children with disabilities, children with disabilities in mainstream schools receive less attention from teachers and there is an over-emphasis on academic achievement and examination as opposed to all round development of children. Furthermore there is often unacceptance of intellectually disabled children on programmes (MOESS, 2008, pp. 60-61).

In Ghana, schools with boarding facilities are considered prestigious. However, from the literature, there are tensions in SEN schools which

have residential facilities as they are considered dumping grounds for disabled children by some parents when they virtually leave their children in the schools to the sole care of school management.

Critique against Residential Provisions

Disabled children are among those most likely to spend time in residential institutions. The single largest category of disabled children living away from home is children with a variety of complex physical and learning disabilities attending residential special schools. The issue of the protection from abuse of disabled children living in residential settings has received much less attention than the protection of “looked after” children by authorities such as Social Services. Indeed:

The paucity of research in this field reflects the low priority often given to the needs of disabled children, and the myth that disabled children are unlikely to be abused. Yet there is evidence, from accounts by disabled adults of their childhood, and from research and practice experience, to suggest that disabled children are at increased risk of abuse (Paul, Cawson, & Paton, 2004; p.7).

Residential school settings present their own challenges to the educational manager as well as to families and CHI (see for example Paul, Cawson & Paton, 2004; Read & Harrison, 2002). Among other issues, the enrolment of the CHI in a boarding school means the CHI will be away from the family and community for about 52 weeks in a year (Zapfen, 1998). This length of time away reduces opportunities for interaction with family and community

members, leading to a sense of isolation. Zapien (1998) again notes in her discourse that some parents were of the opinion that care givers in residential settings were incapable of offering the love, discipline and nurturing that exist within families.

One other concern that is expressed against residential schools is that of the suitability of programmes that meet the individual needs of the CHI. As the evidence portrays (Avoke, 2002; Gadagbui, 2002) hearing impairment covers a wide range of hearing loss and children come to school with other competing needs. There is the likelihood that programmes offered to CHI may ignore some individual needs in contrast to the use of Individualised Educational Plans (IEP) with children with special needs in mainstream settings. Other studies have confirmed adverse effects resulting from bullying and sexual abuse of children with disabilities in residential settings (see for example; Paul, Cawson & Paton, 2004; Read & Harrison, 2002).

Notwithstanding the various arguments for and against the utilisation of the residential model in the educational provisions for CHI, the contributions that such special schools have made to the lives of CHI cannot be disputed. Rayner, (2007), succinctly sums up the discourse thus:

a degree of segregation is seen as necessary despite limitations of a restricted curriculum and isolation...many special schools, classes and units have reversed patterns of hopelessness, failure and behaviour and continue to be popular with many parents and children (p.25).

In amalgamating all the parameters to understanding disability and hearing impairment in perspective, what has been the trend in the educational provisions for CHI in Ghana? Answering this question follows in the next sections of the discussion.

Brief History of SEN in Ghana

The emergence of special education in Ghana began from philanthropist missionary efforts from around 1936, almost a hundred years after the introduction of formal education into the country (MOEYS, 2005). Prior to this introduction, basic personal care for people with disabilities (PWDs) was the responsibility of immediate family members. The welfare of PWDs was not the priority of any governmental entity as PWDs were completely excluded from all schooling experiences. According to Marfo (1986), little attention was given to people with disabilities until 1945 when the Basel missionaries established a school for blind students and a few physically challenged persons. Basically, these students were given literacy and skills in basket weaving and the graduates were equipped to earn a living in basket weaving. A second school was established by a team of Methodist and Basel missionaries in 1948, again, with a curriculum of literacy and basket weaving.

In 1957, Reverend Dr. Andrew Forster, a deaf African-American minister established the first school for the deaf in Accra. This was closely followed by the Methodist Mission's establishment of a school for the physically challenged in 1964. Another school for the learning disabled was established by the Society of Friends of the Mentally Retarded (Anson-Yevu, 1988).

The growth in education provisions for PWDs continued until around the time the nation gained independence from its colonial masters. The plight of

PWDs was brought into mainstream public debate in 1959 and a governmental committee was commissioned to survey the relevant issues. This commission, led by Sir John Wilson, the then director of the Commonwealth Society for the Blind, who was himself blind, was to establish the incidence of disability as well as the classification of the different groups of disability within the country. The commission recommended among other things that a training institute for teachers be established to address the educational needs of children with hearing impairment (CHI) in the country as there was a high incidence of that disability in the country (Avoke, 1992). Further to this, Avoke (1992) asserts that around this time, a special sitting of parliament advocated for the administration of special education to be the responsibility of government. The expectation was for education of PWDs to be free and for the teachers to be trained abroad as there were no schools as yet to undertake the training. This led to the establishment of residential institutions for children with severe mental retardation and visual impairment. Some children with severe levels of hearing impairment attended special residential schools whilst those with moderate hearing impairment attended special day schools.

Management of SEN Schools

The Special Education Division (SpEd) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) was established in 1976 to facilitate the provision of special education. However, it is reported that it took nine years of strong advocacy before the unit was upgraded to a directorate (Avoke, 2002, Gadagbui, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988). This placed the directorate at par with the other divisions in the service in a move to enhance the operations, as this elevation entailed a budget line that would finance directorate programmes. Without a specific official

documentation of its mandate, the division operates on an extension of the general education legislative provisions, a situation which was of concern to practitioners within the division. Indeed, Casely-Hayford (2002) indicates that:

...the Special Needs Division has articulated in many of its documents the need for clearer legislation/guidance on special needs education to give direction on the policy, implementation and forms of parental support (p.11).

One other interesting finding from the report was the interpretation of issues including that of “free education for the disabled” (p.11). This need for interpretation of policy expectations supports my own observation that issues outlined in policies have inadequate interpretations. This lack of clarity opens the policies to varied interpretations and subsequently to different levels of strategies to facilitate their implementation in the field of SEN provision.

The objectives of the Special Education in Ghana according to the division are as follows. To:

1. take responsibility for the education of handicapped pupils and students from the basic level to the university level;
2. set standards to guide the effective delivery of SEN;
3. initiate the development of policies, guidelines and procedures for carrying out SEN programmes and services;
4. monitor, inspect and evaluate programmes and services in order to ensure quality and efficiency in SEN;
5. support and provide professional development by organising courses/conferences/ seminars for staff providing SEN;

6. co-ordinate SEN activities, programmes and services in special/inclusive schools and at the regional and district levels; to ensure the provision of assistive technology, specialised equipment and teaching/learning materials;
7. work in close collaboration with relevant bodies-ministries, departments, stakeholders, divisions, institutions, and NGOs to provide services to children with disabilities (CWDs) (Special Education Division [SpED], 2005; p.23).

One intriguing aspect of the placement of special schools within the administrative structure of the Ghana Education Service (GES) is evident in school reports and liaisons directly to the headquarters in the nation's capital where all first cycle schools within a school district operate under the administrative guidance of the district education directorate (DED). Because special schools serve the whole region, it became problematic as to which district directorates to report to. Appropriating funding especially, from DEDs then posed serious challenges for school heads in the day-to-day administration of their schools (Casely-Hayford, 2002; Avoke, 2002).

The discussion thus far has focused on the availability and management of educational provisions in the mainstream and SEN settings. The focus now narrows into the management issues that pertain to study schools, the main context for this study.

The School Management Committee

Within the school effectiveness and school improvement literature, school management is described as “school-based management” and is a legally constituted board with representatives from different stakeholders (Oduro,

Dachi, Fertig & Rarieya, 2008). The School Management Committee (SMC) was the main management authority directly in charge of the school. Their authority and management decisions were implemented in the execution of the day-to-day school management of the school by the school head with the help of subordinates. Different models that portray the stature of SMCs and some models are examined next.

The School Management Committee - International Models. In the UK, the model of the school management team is described as a board of representatives of stakeholders who are concerned about education. Bush (1995) observes that before the introduction of the education reform act (ERA) of 1998, schools were managed by the local education authorities (LEAs). Schools were reported as being owned by LEAs and in some cases decisions that were taken on behalf of schools were seen by stakeholders as not promoting specific local needs and interests. The introduction of the ERA and subsequent legislation has given school management teams some management responsibilities. To Duvall and Erickson (1981) a management team can be described as a group with formalized and legitimized roles involving decision making and problem solving.

Writing within the South African context, Tyala (2004), describes the South African version of school management boards in almost the same terms, dwelling on the composition and duties of the school management board as described in the UK model. Tyala again states that in South Africa, membership of the school management team is identified to include: "...senior staff members...additional members outside the school who have specific skills, knowledge and expertise can be co-opted to aid in the management of

the school” (p.14). The composition of the SMC reflects what is taking place in many African countries including Tanzania, South Africa, Ghana and Kenya (MOESS, 2008).

The School Management Committee - Local Models. In Ghana, while the policy on school management follows a similar description, at the time of the data harvesting, the School Management Committee (SMC), though established by policy, did not have the mandate and authority as described under school based management. The description of the SMC as it pertains in Ghana closely resembles the UK’s model of the school management board. In this model, stakeholders drawn from within and outside the school constitute a board to oversee the running of the school. Each public basic school was supposed to have an SMC in place by December 2004 and operational by 2005. The SMC is responsible for making decisions on how policies from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports (MOESS) should be implemented at the school level.

The New Education reforms of 2008 is seeking to further devolve authority to the SMC, giving it the mandate to make decisions concerning financial and human resource management which at the moment is the prerogative of the GES. The report indicates that many schools do have their SMCs in place but the concern was with how effective the bodies were being operated to improve on the attainment of educational goals (MOESS, 2008).

Importance of the SMC. With a wide representation of differing interest groups, school level management has been found to foster demand and related economic and social benefits that address the specific priorities and needs of a local community (The Mitchell Group, 2009; OECD, 2005). The

institutionalization of SMCs also promotes accountability in financial matters as pitted against educational outcomes (Mitchell Group, 2009; MOESS, 2008; Tyala, 2004).

Critique of the SMC. In spite of the gains that accrue to education from the use of SMC in educational management, the practice comes along with some limitations. In the opinion of Bush, though the purpose is to ensure democracy, the process of collective decision making can be “time-consuming” as the consensus-building process demanded the agreement of a significant section of stakeholders (Bush, 1995, p. 67). Some SMCs have been noted to “hijack” school decision making and may coerce the school head to give them undue privileges for their wards and relatives (MOESS, 2008; Tyala, 2004).

Basing my assumptions that the school was a social system that existed in an environment, the day-to-day management of schools was assumed to be a product of the decisions arrived at by school management and relevant stakeholders. The next section of this discussion on the theoretical foundations of my study focuses on the interactions schools had with stakeholders in their environment and how this fits in with my conceptual framework.

Stakeholders in Education

Drawing from the need to democratize educational decision making, school level management engages with people and groups who share a common concern for education within a society. Schools appropriate resources from the stakeholders within the environment to execute school programmes. In a reciprocal action, such stakeholders also express the need to know what is happening in the schools as far as the expenditure of their resources was

concerned. This need leads to a pressure on the management of schools to take the views of such interest groups or stakeholders into consideration when decisions are being undertaken. Stakeholders in education have been described as individuals or groups who have a vested interest (financial, social or otherwise) in education (MOESS, 2008; Tyala, 2004).

In Ghana, stakeholders are identified to include PTAs and School Management Committees (SMCs), alumni, civil society associations, community members, religious organisations, professional associations and international donors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), private sector (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Avoke, 2002). All these bodies have varying interests in educational provisions and make their presence felt in the decision making that guides the management of the schools.

Composition of Stakeholders in Education. From the literature, stakeholders that were found to be directly connected to the SMC which oversaw the day-to-day management of schools were identified as;

1. the GES (responsible for transmitting and financing policies from the MOESS and thus served as the authorizing agency for all pre-tertiary school activities);
2. NGOs that supported the schools with funding for infrastructure and other budgetary support. The World Vision International and the Catholic Relief Services were notable in the bulk of the support that SMSSCHI received in the country (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Avoke, 2002).

3. Parents and Community Members who transferred their socialization mandate to the school and demanded education which they assessed to be relevant to the lives and future of their offspring (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Avoke, 2002).

Following from the above, it is noted that the stakeholders are connected to the management of the schools in diverse ways. The next section focuses on models that school management can utilise to relate with stakeholders.

Models of Relating with Stakeholders in School Management. The state of the linkages that schools had with these stakeholders formed part of the research inquiry and the data gathered addressed research questions three to five. This inquiry was done first from the perspective of school level management teams to obtain an idea of how school management saw their management practices as being influenced by the interaction that it experienced with these stakeholders during Phase 1. For Phase 2, I went further to include the views of some stakeholders on issues in school management and thus developed a comprehensive framework for describing school level management in SMSSCHI. A review of the models that educational authorities may utilise to involve stakeholders in school management in Ghana (MOESS, 2008; Epstein, 2001; Ankomah & Atakpa, 1998; Anson-Yevu, 1988) is described next.

Parental/Community Involvement in School Management. Basic schools according to GES policy were to have parent-teacher association (PTA) and school management committees (SMCs) in place by 2004 and operational by 2005 (MOESS, 2008). The main reason for the institution of

these bodies was to provide avenues for parents and community members to be involved in school decision making as a means of implementing the decentralization Act of 1986. The SMC was to rekindle community spirit through involving stakeholders in the identification and solution of local problems to improve on education quality (MOESS, 2008; MOE, 2002).

The PTA, set in place as a means of decentralizing and democratising educational decision making, has been found worthwhile in enhancing parental and community involvement in school management. PTAs serve many varied purposes in school management including the facilitation of family networks for information discussion and dissemination, the development of acceptable norms and rules to govern school and community activities, helping children to gain an appreciation for education (Cheung, Lam & Ngai, 2008; Epstein, 2001).

SMCs and PTAs are to foster good relationships between school and their communities as well as improve to on school accountability (especially with how funds are expended to finance school activities). Some challenges including some head teachers refusing to accept them as part of school management (MOE, 2002) have in some cases limited the working of these bodies in schools across the country.

Volunteering. Stakeholders are encouraged to volunteer in the schools. From providing manual labour during construction to providing expert knowledge for teaching some school subjects like Arts and Crafts, all stakeholders are encouraged to participate in school management. Some international and local NGOs have provided volunteer personnel to schools to assist in teaching and learning and sometimes in providing support services

like computing and assessment of disability (MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; MOE, 2002).

Funding/Technical Support. Some NGOs and multi-national donors have contributed support for schools, organizing short courses to provide continuing education for teachers to enhance their educational quality. A large number of programmes and assessments have been carried out by these stakeholders as a means of helping to improve on educational standards in the country (MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; MOE, 2002).

School/Community Collaboration. Schools sometimes interacted with their communities by taking part in communal labour and some festivals. School Heads may engage in discussions on local radios to discuss pertinent issues in the society. Schools may also be invited to perform cultural dances during local and national festivals (MOESS, 2008; MOE, 2002).

All the identified avenues are aimed at fostering good relations between the school and its community to derive all the benefits that accrue from an active and productive relationship. What was the situation in study schools as far as the engagement of school management and stakeholders was concerned? What challenges do school management experience in their day-to-day management of school activities?

The critical role of stakeholders in the management of schools (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007) is recognized in the literature. The maintenance of the interaction that enables stakeholders to participate in school management is equally observed to be key to effective school accountability and subsequent school quality (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Seidu & Hunt, 2007). The literature, however, notes

that even as school management strives to promote effective school management, some challenges do crop up. The next section explores some of such challenges experienced in schools.

Challenges in the Management of SEN. In the management of SEN, just like in mainstream settings, school management experience challenges. Some of such challenges identified in the literature (see for example MOESS, 2008; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988) are discussed next. The data derived from this review of the literature for this section addresses research question five.

Communication Problems. There was a lack of agreement on the best possible ways of teaching CHI. While the past 40 years saw a use of total communication which included speech therapy and signing, the new policy of the exclusive use of signing has put a pressure on teaching staff. Basically, the problems are two-fold.

First, there was no nationally recognized sign language system in place. This means that colloquial signs were in use, making it difficult for both teachers and pupils to communicate effectively. Again, advocates opted for the use of either the American Sign Language (a legacy from Reverend Dr. Andrew Forster, the deaf priest who introduced formal education for CHI) or the Ghanaian sign language which was only at the developmental stage.

Second, teachers of the deaf, whether with specialist training or not, were mostly hearing and therefore learned sign language as another language. This meant that teachers signed an acquired language and in some cases accuracy was compromised (MOESS, 2008; Gadagbui, 2002).

Inaccessible Curriculum. Children with hearing impairment (CHI) unlike their hearing counterparts did not possess the acquisition of language and conceptualization of basic concept acquired through incidental learning. The lack of hearing imposes serious limitations on incidental learning through which all hearing children acquire concepts for language. Basic concepts that the curriculum utilises to educate the child have to be systematically taught before their operationalisation can be carried out. This situation is especially precarious when it comes to language and all other subjects that require reading. CHIs were therefore very limited when it came to languages and all other related subjects. In Ghana, at the moment there is no differentiated curriculum that will address this gap, preventing CHI from getting a full access to the basic education curriculum (Agbeyenga, 2002; Avoke, 2002).

Negative Public Attitude. The attitude of Ghanaians towards people with disability has already been discussed earlier in this chapter. It is reiterated here that CHIs have more profound problems with poor societal attitudes. Where the blind child is an object of pity because it is visually possible to make a judgment on the inability of a person's inability to see, deafness is not visually discerned, giving the impression that such a child was a moron as they operate with difficulty in everyday life like any hearing child (Agbeyenga, 2002; Avoke, 2002; MOE, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988).

Architectural Barriers. Public buildings are designed and built without making any provision for PWDs. The physically challenged have no access to most buildings as there are no lifts or ramps to enable them do so. There are no configurations in buildings to help those with hearing impairments to have access to acoustic amplification basically because virtually no one uses

hearing aids. This again infringes on the rights of PWDs (MOESS, 2008; Agbeyenga, 2002; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; MOE, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988).

Inadequate/Ineffective Assessment Facilities. For an effective educational provision to be designed and implemented to suit the specific needs of any PWD demands the assessment and diagnosis of the particular ability of the individual. Institutions that cater to this need are very few in the country. Where they exist, the conditions are in a deplorable state. The Casely-Hayford report notes that by 2002, there were nine assessment centres located mainly in the capital, the Central, Western and Volta regions, all of which are located in the south of the country, depriving those in the north from this vital service. The report again notes that the poor state of assessment facilities means that the integration quest of the GES is fraught with problems as the specific needs of individual children could not be accurately adjudged for necessary intervention. This leads to children who could otherwise be mainstreamed taking up the limited spaces in special schools for children with more severe types of disability.

Inequitable Distribution of Qualified Teachers. One problem that ultimately affected the quality of education that PWDs accessed was the placement of teachers in schools. Schools in urban areas are overstaffed while those located in rural settings experienced critical teacher shortages (MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; MOE, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988).

Pre/Post Specialist Teacher Training in SEN. Teachers are given some basic exposure to SEN during their training in college while specialist teachers are trained to teach PWDs. However, teachers may be posted to a school

specialising in the education of children with a disability for which s/he was not trained for. This ultimately affects their effectiveness on the field as their limited training hinders their ability to perform. Again, the low level of continuing education means teachers have to struggle to keep up with changing global trends in SEN and as such have limited competencies on the field (MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; MOE, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988).

Inadequate Funding. The most critical of all the challenges associated with the practice of SEN in the country is that of funding to the sector. While the bulk of funding to SEN comes from the central government, what is available is woefully inadequate to cater for the needs of the schools (MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; MOE, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988). The government has implemented various reforms including the capitation grant (where funds allocated per pupil are assigned to schools to fund activities), and the school feeding programme to provide free school meals and school uniforms for children in deprived areas. In spite of all these measures, schools from wealthier areas tend to end up with more funds as they are able to admit more pupils and thus earn more of the grants. Again, inadequate funding means that SEN needs cannot be funded and, subsequently, pupils have to do without thus affecting the quality of education disabled children access (MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; MOE, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988).

Gender Issues Underlying Leadership in School Management. An intriguing phenomenon in school management in Sub-Saharan African countries, including Ghana, is the under-representation of females in school

management (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007). In a study into school leadership in Ghana, Oduro, Dachi and Fertig (2007) observed that there was a resistance by both females and males to the headship of females. This created an impact on behaviour and on female teachers and expectations from female students. Oduro and MacBeath (2003) also found similar occurrences in their study on school leadership. They assert that, of their respondents, two female heads experienced initial difficulties when they were first appointed to their posts. Similarly, this observation is further confirmed by another study conducted in Botswana and Ghana. This study sought to analyse issues of gender in informal dimensions of institutional life (Dunne, 2007; cited in Oduro, Dachi, Fertig & Rarieya, 2008). According to the findings, both male and females were happier to work under a male head. This, in the view of Dunne, was a reflection of the cultural understanding of leadership which projected men as leaders and women as followers.

The discussion so far suggests that management of every organisation including schools as organisations experience some challenges in the execution of their day-to-day activities. What other factors moderated the practice of management of schools? The next section focuses on some intervening factors in school management.

Intervening Factors in School management. Research question six sought to examine the policies that guided the practice of SEN management in Ghana. The data obtained on related policy issues follow next.

SEN Policy. From the inception of SEN in the country, the sector has received both international and local support for its practice. Of concern,

however, is the continuing lack of implementation of the dictates of policies that accord legal recognition to PWDs as pertains in more developed parts of the world. It has been noted in various reviews of both whole educational sector and SEN settings, that there was no specific policy that articulated a philosophy on disability to guide practice (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; GOG, 2007; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Asamani, 2000). There are only a few documents, which clearly outline special needs education targets for MOE and GES. These include the MOE's Policy and Programme Document (2001). The key vision outlined for SEN by the MOE indicates that:

...the main thrust of the Special Education Policy is the integration of pupils where possible in the mainstream system. It is also to ensure the provision of adequate resources for special schools (p.14).

In her situational analysis of SEN provision in Ghana, Casely-Hayford (2002) identifies the following policies in use; The Children's Act (Act 560) which states that: "...a disabled child has a right to special care, education and training wherever possible to develop his maximum potential and be self-reliant" (p.1). Another policy is the National Policy on Disability which entails various strategies to be utilised to: "ensure access of people with disabilities to education and training at all levels" (p.1).

These policies all maintain the rights of disabled people to be mainstreamed into the socio-economic life of the country. These rights, in effect, provide a mandate for society to supply all facilities that will enable PWDs live productive and independent lives. The MOESS and the GES reflect

the subtle negative perception of PWDs by the society, in the absence of a clearly articulated legal document that sets out guidelines for the operation of SEN in the country. Casely-Hayford assessing the Vision 2020 a policy that documents strategic plans by the GES to improve on educational quality by the year 2020 again notes that:

...while the vision is in line with the dictates of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill and the Salamanca Accord to which Ghana was a signatory, the document does not assign any budgetary allocations to the vision (Casely-Hayford 2002; p.23).

As a result of the lack of the articulation of policy guidelines, various education reforms including the FCUBE which has provided the thrust for education practice from 1996 to the 2000s failed to articulate any coherent targets for SEN. Indeed, the reform did not even mention disability at all and this subsequently went to affect funding to the sector (MOESS 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; GOG, 2005; Casely-Hayford 2002).

Some educationists suggest the low recognition given to SEN issues stems from the conceptualisation the Ghanaian society has about disability. In the view of Agbenyega (2002), the labelling ascribed to disability was one where the individual with a disability was seen as lacking something in the body and as such was not fully human. PWDs are seen as deviants, a result of a curse or misdoings of family members, hence such people should not mix up with mainstream society. While these extreme views on disability may not be

acceptable today, the slow pace at which attention is being accorded disability issues within society and especially in educational policy-making points to a strong disregard for the disabled in the country.

In 2006, the National Disability Act was enacted to provide legislation for the conduct of disability issues in Ghana. In response, by the beginning of the 2009/ 2010 academic year, the Special Education Division (SpED) division of the GES had designed a new policy guideline to serve the sector. The major focus of the guidelines was the broadening of the practice of mainstreaming for all children with disability who could benefit from being placed in mainstream settings. As a result of the broadening, provisions for children with intellectual impairments within local institutions in various communities took off at an amazing pace across the country. This was to encourage parents with such disabled children to access education on a non-boarding basis for their children. By 2009, the new strategic plan for the GES had to some limited extent, provided some guidelines for the practice of SEN. However, no specific budget line was assigned to the sector with the explanation that funding for outlined activities had been provided within the larger budget for basic education.

The failure to assign budgetary lines for SEN, arguably limited the aim of outlining activities specially to cater for the needs of PWDs, if the SEN sector still had to lobby for funding to finance activities. The solution of choice should have been a separately defined budget for SEN just as there was a separate budget for Girl-child issues. The expectation of the SpED and indeed all stakeholders who are advocating for improvement in the SEN sector, is that

the new policy designed will be put before Parliament soon and receive legal backing for the enhanced provision of SEN.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed literature on the theories and conceptualisation of disability within the Ghanaian society, including an analysis of the evolution in special education. The evidence indicates that from the basic provisions started in the 1950s, more and more educational provisions were being made available for PWDs. These provisions were influenced by the understandings of disability that policy makers and implementers brought to the concept of disability. While there were official documents that reiterated Ghana's conformity to international demands for inclusive education, there are reports of very minimal gains due to challenges in the implementation of inclusive strategies.

The review discussed the incidence of disability in Ghana as moderated by international and local mandates. From the evidence, people may be disabled by a physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, medical conditions or mental illness. Such impairments, conditions or illnesses may be permanent or transitory in nature. This research is concerned with the question of how the Ghanaian community deals with SEN issues, including educational provisions for PWDs.

The presentation continued with a further exploration of the nature of the school management committee, its composition and value as a management tool within the provision of education. For this study, stakeholders in education are identified as parents, communities, the GES and NGOs working with special schools in the society.

Concerning management, some challenges that impacted on school management were examined. The literature suggests that school management experienced challenges as they executed their mandate in the management of schools. What were some of the challenges that study schools faced? How did such challenges affect management practices in schools? These questions are explored in other parts of the thesis.

School management engaged with stakeholders using different models. The literature provides a strong basis to support the assertion that engaging with stakeholders was a means of improving management decision making. This engagement also promoted parental and community ownership of local schools to improve on accountability. How did study schools engage with stakeholders within their settings? What techniques did schools employ in this engagement process?

Policies that underpinned the practice of SEN were also discussed. Policy making concerning SEN in conformity with international initiatives has experienced a very slow pace in the articulation of a national philosophy to adequately cater for the needs of PWDs in Ghana. Advocates and practitioners have called for a SEN policy and at the time of data collection such a document was receiving attention for ministerial approval. By the end of the 2009/2010 academic year, there will be a comprehensive policy in place for the work of its implementation to begin enhancing educational provisions for PWDs (SpED, 2010).

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPTUAL ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Overview

This chapter is a discussion of the theoretical stance that informed my understanding of reality in the study. The discussion starts with the questions which guided the literature search. I reviewed the literature on the enduring leadership-management debate, looking at the arguments for and against the adoption of one or the other in the school as an organisation. I also investigated POSDCoRB as an analytical tool for assessing the work that management undertakes in organisations. Some studies that have utilised the tool in analyzing some organisations are further explored. Finally, I summarised the chapter to give a gist of issues discussed.

Literature Review Questions

The review for this section was guided by the following questions; what does the literature say about the leadership/management debate? Which paradigm was best suited for the management of SMSSCHI? What is the membership of the management teams? What does the literature say about the POSDCoRB debate? What is the boundary concept and how is it enacted in schools?

The Management-Leadership Debate

Management has been recognised as one of the critical factors that keeps organisations like the school in effective operation (Bush, 2008; Hultgren, 2000). In an environment of constant flux in ideology, policy and practice to reflect societal demands, management in any organisations including the school have to employ a multiplicity of innovative strategies to keep up with the demands of these environmental changes. For some time, however an on-going and passionate debate, actively discernable in the literature, has been going on among practitioners. For instance, Hultgren (2000) asserts that “the leadership and management debate has been a hot issue for a number of years and continues to appear in the literature on a regular basis” (p.1). This view is supported by various leaders in the management and leadership field (see for example Bush, 2008; Bennis, 1994). In some instances, this debate is presented as an “either-or” discussion. While to some management has provided stability by controlling resources in organisations and helped in the achievement of organisational goals according to laid-down plans, to critics, management has held back progress and facilitated stagnation and inability in organisations realising their targets hence the call for leadership. To them for a long time in organisational administration, management, had failed to achieve success as and has resulted in minimal achievement of organisational goals. Other discussants are of the view that the two concepts are inter-twined and for an organisation to succeed there must be a conscious effort to find and implement a balance between leadership and management. An understanding of management and leadership provides a background to understand this on-going debate.

Evolution in the Management-Leadership Debate

Tracing the historical development of this enduring debate, Dembowski (1997) observes that no educational administrator wants to be known as a manager since the term is associated with negativism, whilst leadership is viewed positively. Citing Wilson (1887), Dembowski (1997) suggests that the dialogue on management and leadership began with a focus on administration when schools added the subject area to their curriculum then moved on to management in school administration. The next phase was the directing of this focus to leadership. A lot of attention around this time began to be placed on leadership in organisations, hailing it as the panacea to all of the ills of organisations. Further, leadership was seen as a means of creating the competitive edge that organisations needed to survive in a highly competitive world. The school is not a profit-making entity and cannot be described with all the characteristics of a business entity. However, Bush (2008) observes that before the development of educational management as a field of study, school administration was heavily influenced by the precepts and theories from the field of business management. Thus the debate on the relative importance of management and leadership in school administration reflected the dialogue in the business world.

By the 21st century, academics and practitioners had started to dialogue about the need to minimise the adoration of leadership at the expense of management, calling for a balance between the two concepts. Dembowski (1997) reviewing the outcomes of a survey carried out among educational administrators during a professional development workshop indicates that participants were surprised to discover that the majority of them rated leader

9.2 and manager 8.8 when asked to give their perceptions on the two roles. This outcome confirms that both management and leadership were important in the administration of the school. In another workshop for principals and school superintendents, participants again noted that the bulk of their administrative time was spent on management related tasks when they analysed their day-to-day activities in school administration (Dembowski, 1997).

Contributing to the debate, Hultgren (2000) suggests that perhaps it was Bennis and Nanus (1985) who first popularized the management verses leadership dichotomy. Bennis interviewed and interacted with 90 of America's most successful leaders from diverse enterprise, researching common factors that such people exhibited and came to a conclusion that; "...managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right things" (1994; p. 21). He went on to indicate however, that it was not as simple as that, asserting that at the time there were more than 400 definitions of leadership, making the concept one of the most studied aspect of management. Bennis states that the management-leadership debate was an argument without an end. Hultgren goes further to indicate that this debate was extended by Kotter (1996) who differentiated between managers and management as well as leaders and leadership. In Kotter's view, leaders and managers could be described as good, bad or neutral. Leadership and management on the other hand described two fields of action. By his estimation, management is linked with efficiency measures as shown in providing organisational stability by employing: "... planning, organizing, staffing, resourcing and the past" while leadership was associated with: "...change, direction and the future" (in

Hultgreen; p.2). This view has received acclaim in the literature (see for example; Bolman & Deal, 2003; Bennis, 1994).

The trend in the 2000s is a call for the manager and the leader to acknowledge the need for each other in the organisation to achieve set goals (Hultgren, 2000). There is a consensus that both management and leadership are necessary for every successful organisation. Performing important functions, both leadership and management have different purposes and seek to obtain different outcomes. Management provides the day-to-day activities that drive action within organisations and work towards achieving outcomes. Leadership is idealized and hailed as the most important feature that provides impetus and vision for organisations to identify its niche within the competition that will give it an accompanying competitive edge (Hultgren, 2000).

The two concepts should not be an “either-or” discussion but a dialogue that seeks the strengths of the two approaches and harness these strengths for the common good of organisations such as the school. In an era where the clarion call is for leadership and vision setting in organisations, for my study, I was interested into understanding the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana. This was in response to the fact that Ghana was signatory to a host of international and bi-lateral agreements which clearly articulate projections and visionary policies that should have radically impacted the practice within the SEN sector (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002). However, the implementation of these policies within the field strongly suggested to me that there was a need to assess the step-by-step understanding of what pertains within the

practitioners' arena and thus possibly understand how these policies are being implemented. Leadership is important but the management that provides the bulwark and foundation for vision needs to be investigated if visionary ideals are to be implemented and make a change in educational practice. This view echoes Bush and Oduro's (2006) observation that while there was a global trend to isolate leadership as the flagship for educational improvement there was ample evidence to indicate that for developing nations like African nations, schools were largely dysfunctional. In their view, a focus on management as defined by Cuban (1988) would be a more appropriate choice of paradigm as there was the need for a consolidation of everyday management practices to get school systems moving before the introduction of changes, a core tenet of leadership.

Management within Study Context

Reflecting the leadership/management debate, defining management within study context was difficult. Whilst the bulk of issues that pertained to school management were of interest to me, issues in direction setting (a basic tenet of leadership) in schools also piqued my curiosity. As earlier indicated in this chapter, the study of school management was necessary to provide a window into understanding trends taking place in the management of SMSSCHI. Within the study context, I describe management as the day-to-day practice of planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting that takes place within schools and undertaken by the School Management Committee (SMC) and other local school structures like committees (Bush, 2008; MOESS, 2008; Dembowski, 1997). Management of

the day-to-day activities of the school is the duty of a team. This team's decisions are also influenced by other groups within the environment.

Conceptualising POSDCoRB

Undertaking an analysis of the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana demands the identification and use of an appropriate analytical framework. One long-standing and still relevant framework is that originally developed by Gulick and subsequently published with Urwick (1937) and subsequently developed and used by others (see for example; de Grazia, 2006; Karia, 2002) is discussed in this section.

Organisational analysis can be traced to the later parts of the 19th and 20th centuries with scholars like Taylor, Fayol, Weber, Gulick and Urwick being among the notable figures who featured prominently in the early attempts of the scientific study of organisations (Clutterback & Crainer, 1990). In an era where administration was considered an art, these scholars attempted to introduce a scientific approach to management with convictions from their engineering and military backgrounds. Drawing from Taylor's universal 'principles of scientific management', principles formulated to enhance productivity and efficiency in organisations, Gulick and Urwick (1937) articulated the POSDCoRB as a tool for codifying management activities as a means to achieve organisational goals. The two believed that there could be "universal" principles of management within organisations. They suggested that the same administrative principles could be applied to all organisations in respective of type. These principles, just like any scientific formula could be followed to ensure efficiency within organisations, making administration a science as opposed to the then prevalent view of administration as an art. The

framework codified management as POSDCoRB an acronym which stands for Planning, Organising, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting and Budgeting. To Gulick, these were the basic functions of any management activity. All management must of necessity include aspects of the various activities identified in the framework.

Gulick, a business consultant was into political science and public service. He was mostly concerned with how managers got things done and set out to codify the functions of the executive. Together with Urwick, a British soldier turned theorist who fused ideas drawn from scientific management, the prevalent theoretical thinking of his time with concepts from classical organisational theory, the two edited a publication titled the “Papers on the Science of Administration”, isolating the responsibilities of the chief executive and coined the acronym POSDCoRB to describe the various activities of management (Gulick & Urwick, 1937). This acronym provides a framework which enables the management of an institution to be analysed under various headings: Planning, Organising, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, Budgeting (POSDCoRB) with the following explanations for each concept:

Planning; is the core of the management functions, serving as the platform from which all other functions take off. Planning involves the working out the broad outlines of the things needed to be done as well as the activities and methods for achieving set goals. Koontz (2001) observes that planning sets the direction for action, deciding what to do, when to do and how to do in advance in order to achieve the goals of the organisation. Planning is an exercise in problem solving and decision making of actions that utilise

available ways and means to accomplish pre-determined goals, helping to crystallise ideas and formalising actions to avoid confusion, risks, wastages and uncertainties. Planning as a process consists of various steps including;

- the identification of prevailing conditions to identify gaps through such strategies as environmental scanning to identify the contingencies in the economic, political, social and other related factors that impinge on the activities of the organisation;
- the identification of objectives and alternative strategies to attain them. These alternatives are evaluated for their feasibility and decisions made about the critical alternative that can address the set objectives;
- formulation of implementation processes for the operationalisation of the designed plan;
- the intermittent evaluation of activities to ascertain the progress of implementation process, making adjustments where necessary.

There are various models of plans that can be adopted to operationalise the objectives of an organisation like the school.

Some types of plans that can be utilised in schools include;

- strategic planning which involves the analysis of the opportunities and threats, strengths and weaknesses of the organisation to determine a position from which the organisation can operate to achieve set goals. Strategic

- planning has a long time frame, three years or more for implementation. Such plans may be put in phases to reform the whole organisation to attain projections set out in the vision and mission objectives;
- tactical planning is another type of planning, intermediate in range which are designed to develop concrete means to implement a phase in the strategic plan. Tactical planning has a one-year to three-year time frame;
 - operational planning is short term, ranging from one week to a year. Such plans are designed to operationalise some specific part of the tactical plan;

Organising; this is the process of bringing together the physical, financial and human resources and establishing relationships among them to facilitate the achievement of set organisational goals. Organising as a management function also establishes the formal structure of authority through which work subdivisions are arranged, defined and coordinated for set goals. Under organising, Gulick emphasises the division and specialisation of labour in ways that will promote efficiency. As a process, organising includes: the identification of activities; classification or grouping of activities; assignment of duties; delegation of duties with associated authority and responsibility. Organisation as an activity in schools concerns decisions on how to departmentalise activities by function, geography product or customer. In the school setting, activities

are generally divided into academic or curriculum hours and out-of-class activities or co-curricular activities (MOESS, 2008).

Academic work is further organised along subject lines to facilitate teaching and learning. Schools are divided into lower and upper levels and so on;

Staffing; this is the function of motivating and inspiring people to serve the interests of the organisation, recruiting, training, and coordinating their activities to do its work. Staffing has assumed attention in management as the importance of the role of staffing or human resource the more modern term has assumed in the realisation of organisational objectives. The main purpose of staffing is to place the right person in the right role within the organisation.

Directing; this function influences people's behaviour through motivation, communication, group dynamics, leadership and discipline. Directing also involves the continuous task of making decisions and embodying them in the specific and general orders and instructions and serving as the leader of an entity. Directing activates organisational strategies towards the attainment of objectives;

Coordinating; is the management function that interrelate the various parts of work to reduce duplication and ensure coherence. This function describes the synchronisation and integration of group efforts towards the achievement of organisational goals. Management seeks to attain co-ordination through its inherent basic functions

of planning, organizing, staffing, and directing. Co-ordination is not a discrete activity but one that is intertwined through the various other management functions. This integration helps to promote harmony between individuals' efforts towards achievement of organisational goals;

Reporting; is the regular provision of information on management decision making to stakeholders within an organisation. The reporting function helps in keeping those to whom the executive is responsible to informed as to what is going on within the entity. Thus information is passed on to super- and sub-ordinates through various means including reports, research and inspections. In the school, reporting is done internally to staff and students; and internally to parents, community members and the larger society.

Budgeting; includes all that is entailed within fiscal planning accounting and control of funds within the organisation. It involves the quantification of all strategies designed to operationalise organisational objectives, programming the consequences of decisions and policy commitments alongside set targets for the organisation. Schools in Ghana may adopt a policy defined capitation formula for budgeting to access funding from the Ghana Education Service, the policy implementation arm of the Ministry of Education with oversight responsibilities for education.

The Benefits of POSDCoRB in Management

The framework is a time-tested one which has been applied to explain management functions over time and cultures and still forms the basis for explaining management functions in modern times in spite of the numerous variations identified in the literature (Ansari, Daisy & Aafaqiet, 2000; Baker, 1972).

First, the core strength of the framework is its ability to describe management functions allowing an analysis of what should happen within any attempt to steer the affairs of an organisation in the realization of pre-set goals. The framework is useful as a credible starting point to explain management functions in a structural way. To Baker (1972), some practical values of the classical theory on which the POSDCoRB was developed accrue to modern day management. To him, one important contribution was the identification of administration in organisations as a distinct function to be studied. At the time the theory was articulated, the application of scientific principles was yet to be applied to management. This led to a period where society was sensitized to the need to study administration or organisational management. Accordingly, issues concerning decentralization, division of labour and authority were some of the things the theory advocated for in management. A structural approach to organisations was introduced and though criticised, forms the basis for most organisations across various cultures since its inception.

Second, the disagreements people had with the theory led to a spate of research into administration and helped establish the literature on organisations, administration and management as we know it today.

Critique of the POSDCoRB Concept

In the first instance, critics, notably Simon (cited in Clutterback & Crianer, 1990), was noted for his observation that the framework had a serious shortcoming as it failed to identify the universal validity of the principles. To him, these principles merely described and diagnosed administrative situations, concentrating on working rules, displaying aspects of pro-management. Calling the principles of management outlined by Gulick, as mere proverbs in that they provided no clear guidance for administrators as those principles were rather vague and in some instances, contradicted each other.

Second, the framework is criticized as being too ‘atomistic’, playing down the individual and emphasizing organisational goals. Other demerits are identified as the framework being too static and rational, underestimating the human element in the administration of organisations. The human element in organisational administration is seen as a; “...mere cog in the organisation machine” (Simon cited in Clutterback & Crianer, 1990; p.2). Drucker (1954) also describe the framework as being too inward- looking as it outlines what should happen and does not explain what should be achieved, a view that reflects Simon’s opinions.

Third, POSDCoRB is criticised for its shortcoming in ignoring knowledge matter. Every management activity involves the management of “something”, demanding that management has knowledge of what to manage. Merriam (in de Grazia, 2006) observes that, “the most important thing that has been omitted in the fascinating word POSDCoRB is knowledge of a subject matter”. To him:

...you have to plan something, you have to organize something...intimate knowledge of the subject matter with which an administrative unit is primarily concerned is indispensable to the effective, intelligent administration of that agency (2006; p.1).

In addition, as a concept within the classical school on the theory of management the paradigm suffers from the same image. Classical theories on management is deemed as being too mechanistic, analysing management in a structural way and underplaying the contribution of human beings in the whole management process.

While the framework is relatively old its precepts describe succinctly the nature of the management of work organisations and provide a robust platform for analysing the management of special schools. Again, Ansari, Daisy and Aafaqiet (2000), writing on bureaucracy, a basic tenet of the classical management movement observes that bureaucracy is a “persistent organisational form with legendary survival skills” (p.1). This observation is equally true of the POSDCoRB framework. In spite of all the stringent and negative views expressed since the articulation of the framework, just like the classical theory, this framework has stood the test time and has continued to be studied as a fundamental theory in management (Ansari, Daisy & Aafaqiet, 2000).

In order to address some of the shortcomings of the framework, I modified it with the boundary theory concept from the open systems model for studying organisations (Hanna, 1997; James & Connolly, 2000). Fusing the

POSDCoRB and boundary management was very important. On its own, POSDCoRB explained the internal management practices whilst the boundary management principles described the interactions that occurred between management and environmental agencies that exerted influence on management decisions. An analysis of boundary issues in SMSSCHI then was a critical component in an analysis of school management practices.

Boundary Issues in School Management

This section of the discussion of theories that informed my work focuses on boundary theory and helps to answer research question

Conceptualising the Boundary.

Just as systems exist in an environment, so do systems have boundaries. In mechanical or biological systems, boundaries are easily discernable but more complex in social systems like organisations. Boundaries are the points where organisations demarcate as the borders beyond which non-members may be included or excluded from proceedings within it. Boundaries also delineate the points of entry into an organisation. An advocate of the psychoanalytic and systems school of thought, Czander (1993) discussing boundaries asserts that:

...the boundary functions as a point of entry for all of the systems inputs, members, materials, information, and so on. It is also where the organisation meets its environment, including those constituents and significant others who formulate impressions and views of what occur within the organisation's conversion process (p.204).

He further goes on to describe boundaries as the points where all system inputs may enter the system. Czander also describes an organisational boundary as the point where outsiders or non-members of an organisation may witness what takes place within an organisation. From Czander's point of view therefore boundaries are concerned with the psychological and spatial location from which organisational analysts could decipher the unique identities and associated characteristics of organisations like the school. The underlying assumption of this discussion is that any organisation is a socially constructed conception of a group of people coming together to carry out activities to achieve some set goals.

Drawing from the systems theory viewpoint, organisations can be described as open systems which accept inputs from the environment and through some activities turn these resources or inputs into other forms which are subsequently released into the environment as outputs. In the process of accepting inputs and submitting outputs from and into the environment, the system opens up to go these processes. The points at which the reception and discharge take place are described as the boundary. This place is a point which each organisation deliberately establishes to denote points at which they are willing to allow external intrusion into their activities. Czander further suggests that boundaries are imaginary lines that each organisation draws to separate itself from its surrounding environment, specifying how to allow internal and external relationships.

As a heuristic device or symbol, organisational boundary is seen to facilitate an articulation of whom and what should be included or excluded

from an organisation (Hernes, 2004; Jones, James & Dunning, 2004). For schools as organisations, the boundary was conceived as a:

“...complex network of interdependent subsystems where boundaries overlap and where boundaries are frequently crossed...” (Jones, James & Dunning, 2004: p.5). They further asserted that: “...what is important is not perhaps diminishing these boundaries but gaining a greater insight into how these boundaries are experienced and managed” (p.5).

Understanding how SMSSCHI interacted with agencies within their environment was of interest to me as I was of the impression that management practice in schools was result of the interaction between the school and these agencies. Of particular interest was the state of the interaction that existed between the SMSSCHI and identified agencies in the environment as far as the tenets boundary issues as outlined in the Lefebvre model were concerned.

Other models of making sense of the boundary and its management are the realist and nominalist approaches. According to the realist approach, participants define what they perceive to be the boundaries of the organisation. The nominalist approach on the other hand demands that the researcher opts for a boundary that serves anticipated purposes (Scott, 1998; p. 182). For Scott, researchers could focus on actors, relations or activities within either of the two approaches. For this study I chose to understand boundary management from both the realist and the nominalist approaches as I opted to use the Lefebvre model to describe the activities that school management undertook in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI as well as the

relationships that existed between the school and agencies within its environment. From the realist's point of view, respondents indicated their observations on issues in school management as described through the POSDCoRB framework. From the nominalist point of view the research focused on the management activities in SMSSCHI and how these were shaped by prevailing policy, cultural and boundary management issues.

Application of the Boundary Theory.

The search of the literature pointed to very little research in Ghana that utilized the boundary concept as explained within the study, so examples of its use in research is drawn from other settings including the UK and Finland.

In the UK setting, a study by Jones, James and Dunning (2004) on "An analysis of the experience of department boundaries and their management by subject leaders in secondary schools in Wales" studied the experiences of subject leaders and their role in the management of their subjects in their school. In this, James and Dunning study, they describe boundary issues and drawing from the works of Hernes's (2004) framework which was an extension of LeVebre's (1991) model, identify boundaries into mental, physical and social dimensions.

Mental boundaries describe the "core ideas and central concepts", social boundaries were "the identity and social bonding typing the group or organisation", while the physical boundary was the "formal rules and physical structures regulating human action in the group or organisation" (Jones, James & Dunning, 2004; p. 5). This framework of boundary conceptualised as the physical, mental and social dimensions formed the major levels of my quest to

understand the boundary issues that were connected to school management within study schools.

In another application of boundary theory, research conducted in the Finland by Kerosuo (2007) studied the methodological challenges, choices and solutions involved in the studying of boundaries in the multi-organisational context of healthcare. Among other things, Kerosuo observes that behaviour at organisational boundaries was based on a set of cultural rules and resource. Again, the study concludes that prevailing boundaries could not be easily discerned in interaction as they were embedded in regular practice. This reflects the major critique against the use of boundary theory to understand interaction in organisations. Indeed, Jones, James and Dunning (2004) reviewing the literature identifies a call for the 'boundaryless' organisation (Hirschhorn & Gilmore, 1992; Ashkenas, 2000 cited in Jones, James & Dunning, 2004). Proponents of this concept are reported as contending that a more vigorous and progressive organisation is enabled when its boundaries are open and flexible. On the other hand, the boundary was seen as not diminishing but merely mutating (Paulson & Hernes, 2003; Jones, James & Dunning, 2004). The organisation as an entity made up of human beings would be difficult to conceptualise without some sense of boundaries as individuals routinely operate within internal and external boundaries both within and outside the organisation. This idea supports the notion that boundaries as a point of interaction was fused with conflict. For crucial improved organisational performance, schools as organisations need to consciously identify and manage boundaries. In the management of SMSSCHI, arguably, the identification and designing of innovative strategies

for interaction with stakeholders is a critical requirement of every SMC. If school management is to improve on the current involvement of stakeholders in school decision making and thus improved educational goal attainment, there was the need to delve into how SMSSCHI experienced and managed interaction with stakeholders, giving credence to this present study. The present study is therefore useful in providing further insights to understanding interaction between school management and stakeholders in study schools and how it can be explained with boundary theory.

Linking Boundary Theory to POSDCoRB

Social science in its attempt to study human nature and behavior has been described in the literature as complex (see for example Poulson & Wallace, 2004; Agyeman, 1993). Understanding human phenomena can be facilitated with the use of varied ‘screens’, a reflection of the perchance for people to interpret the same phenomena in different ways, using different techniques and instruments, lenses or screens (Poulson & Wallace, 2004). Researchers faced with the challenge of choosing the right screen or lens to facilitate their explanation of the phenomena of interest have to exercise discretion in this choice (ibid). With this caution in mind, I made a choice of two theories to explain the management of SMSSCHI.

Basing my choice of an analytical framework on the literature on management and social systems and my understanding of these concepts, I formulated an eclectic theory that, the type of school level management in SMSSCHI was the result of the interaction that took place between the school management and agencies in the schools’ environment. This interaction, in my estimation could be assessed with a framework that fused the POSDCoRB theory with boundary theory. The eclectic theory then set out to study how

management practices as a product was enacted through the interaction of stakeholders in the schools' environment and school management.

The impetus for the designing of the eclectic theory was arrived at as a result of conclusions reached at the end of the first data collection literature review. The Phase I literature review when aggregated showed a recurring referral to some stakeholders in the schools' environment that to varying degrees, influenced decision making in the management of SMSCCHI. This fused theory is represented graphically below in Fig. 1.

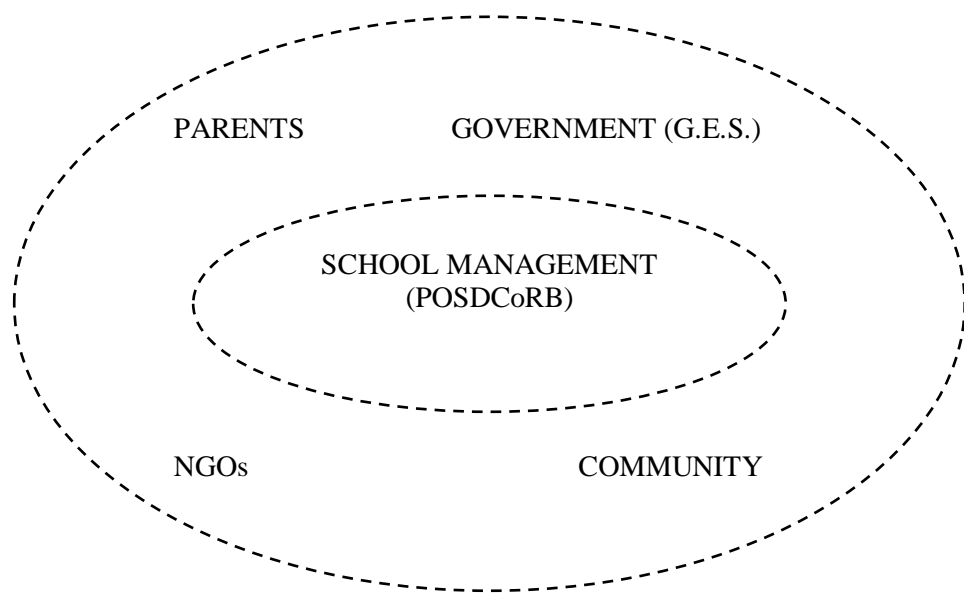


Fig. 1. **Conceptual /Analytical Framework**

Drawing from the underpinnings of the systems approach in general and boundary theory in particular, I sought to understand the role of such stakeholders in the environment and how these influenced the management of SMSSCHI. This decision was basically to understand the relationships that occurred as school management exercised their mandate in the day-to-day management of schools. Understanding how agencies understood and defined their roles and negotiated for representation in school decision making

provided another dimension to my quest of understanding school level management in SMSSCHI.

Conclusion

In this section of my research report, the chapter has discussed the theoretical and conceptual thoughts that under girded the details for Phases 1 and 2 of my study.

The leadership-management dichotomy debate is an on-going one with advocates making strong cases for their stance. One emerging group of scholars is calling for a balance of the two stances, intimating the strengths of each concept is harnessed to enhance the robustness of the other. For me, I choose to focus on management of schools as by my estimation; school level management in Ghana was still struggling to find its feet and needs further investigation hence the need for my study.

The conceptualization of management, tracing the enduring debate on the importance of management and leadership was discussed in this chapter. While one school of thought insisted that leadership or management was the concept of choice in school management another school also advocated for an amalgam of the two concepts as the two could be identified on a continuum and both were critical for effective organisations.

I further analysed the usefulness of adopting the POSDCoRB framework as a tool for analysing management within SMSSCHI in Ghana, taking cognizance of the strengths and weaknesses of the framework. One fundamental weakness of the model is its neglect of the human factor in the execution of management practices. To address the weakness of the framework, I also looked at interactions between school management and

stakeholders by modifying the POSDCoRB framework with aspects drawn from the boundary management concept of the open systems approach to obtain a much more comprehensive description of management.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR PHASE 1

Overview

Chapter 4 examines methodological issues that went into the planning of the study, data collection and data analysis procedures to answer research questions 1- 5, the equivalent of Phase 1 of my study. The chapter commences with a discussion of the study outline and continues with the rationale that guided the choice of research design, data sources, data collection methods and instruments. I further explore measures employed to ensure credibility and rigour in the study, data analysis strategies, ethical considerations, my role in the study and methodological challenges.

The chapter is organised around nine sections: (1) Study outline: (2) Research methodology: (3) Conducting the study: (4) Establishing credibility: (5) Generalizability of research findings: (6) Data analysis procedures: (7) Ethical issues: (8) My role in the study: (9) Methodological reflections.

Study Outline

Based on my research questions and objectives, the study was designed into two phases one and two. The first phase focused on the analysis of school-based management processes of all seven study schools. This phase utilised interviews as the main probing instrument to map out management practices. With the POSDCoRB framework, school-based management was

examined through the responses of School Management Committee (SMC) members, observation of school processes and analysis of documentations.

The second phase investigated management practices in three of the seven study schools. The study re-focused on management practices with an extended use of observations, interviews and document analysis in these three schools to generate a comprehensive view of school management. The views of stakeholders were incorporated with that of SMC members to generate a holistic view of management as enacted in study schools. The relationships that existed between the school and stakeholders were examined with the Boundary Theory to extend my understanding of school management in state maintained study schools for children with hearing impaired (SMSSCHI).

Research Methodology

Prior to making up my mind on the prime choice of methodology to answer my research questions, the analysis of the literature pointed to an enduring debate on the use of various research approaches to examine phenomena. Two very commonly used approaches identified were the quantitative and qualitative approaches. In many instances, this debate has been presented as an ‘either/or’ argument with proponents making arguments as to why one approach is more robust and rigorous than the other (Neill, 2007; Trochim, 2006; Walonick, 2003; Westmarland, 2001).

Proponents of the quantitative approach generally associated with positivist epistemology favour numerical data, stressing merits such as the objectivity of numbers in explaining reality as well as the ability to make projections based on “hard” data. Qualitative researchers closely linked to interpretative epistemology on the other hand, exemplify the robustness of

‘sensitive, nuanced, detailed and contextual’ data that provides a comprehensive basis for understanding reality (Goodhand, 2001).

The arguments supporting the robustness of each paradigm, sometimes termed the positivists-interpretivists debate in research have continued for a long time. Woods and Trexler (2001) contend that in order to clarify differences, various authors have advanced a variety of summary charts (Guba & Lincoln, 1981) and discussions (Eichelberger, 1989: Comber, 1988) as well as different groupings of paradigms in support of their stance.

Whilst each group of researchers may be right, another group has called for an end to this debate and advocated that both approaches have something in common and are actually telling the same story from opposite ends or two sides of the same coin. These proponents view the two paradigms as contributing valuable insights to understanding reality. They further advocate the application of both paradigms in research work such that the perceived shortcomings of each will be compensated for by the other (Westmarland, 2001: Walonick, 2003: Neill, 2007).

All the proponents for the various epistemologies advanced very cogent arguments to substantiate their viewpoints. The arguments had merits on many dimensions that were considered during my deliberation on which paradigm I should adopt for my study. I acknowledge that deciding on a paradigm to adopt for a study opens up as well as closes opportunities available to the researcher in gaining data for a study.

Making decisions on paradigms is related to the posing of questions as how reality is perceived i.e. what is ontology? Is it an objective phenomenon which is external to people or is it the product of an individual's

consciousness? Or in the view of Bryman (2005), is reality that which is constructed but in the light of some underlying powers and structures which define an individual's actions and constructions? What relationships exist between the knower and what can be known i.e. what is epistemology? Is knowledge or reality that which can be acquired or personally constructed? (Bryman, 2005: Merriam, 2002). Other questions that may be posed include questions on how the researcher may ascertain what she/he suspects can be known? Guba and Lincoln (1981) describe this relationship as the methodological consideration in the choice of research paradigm. When a researcher concludes that reality or knowledge is an objective and tangible phenomenon which can be assessed and measured, then he or she may opt for quantitative measures. On the other hand, if there is an acceptance of the notion that knowledge is subjective, personal and lived then the inclination is towards the choice of qualitative methods to gain data. To a large extent however, I felt very drawn to the interpretive paradigm for reasons discussed below.

The epistemological positioning of my study on the management of SMSSCHI within the interpretive paradigm was to enable me “understand reality”, allowing for an interaction between researcher and researched during which processes, stories were told from the participants’ own point of view. This choice was drawn from my philosophical understanding of reality, nature of knowledge and the process of knowing. The qualitative paradigm enabled me to describe reality as a lived experience which could be ascertained and analysed and therefore appropriate for making conclusions on the status of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. Crossley and Vulliamy (1997), quoting

Schutz (1962) argue that any worthwhile sociological interpretation of phenomena must be related to the ways in which participants interpreted their situations. This idea fits in with my critique of the findings of the Casely-Hayford (2002) benchmark study which examined issues in the field of SEN mainly from the basis of conference proceedings. While majority of study participants were drawn from the SEN sector, discussions were undertaken out of the school context and arguably had the tendency of deviating from the situations on site.

Choosing to do school-based assessment of issues in the day-to-day management of schools using the interpretative epistemology was very useful. I was more interested in understanding management issues of SMSSCHI through the experiences of the people who lived it on a day-to-day basis, within the very environment within which it occurred. In the first instance, was the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI something that could be explained from the views of the people who lived it? Or could it be explained by stakeholders who engaged with the schools in the provision of education for CHI?

Second, were there any objective data, out there in the schools, waiting to be captured and analysed or were such data subjective, lived and experiential? Did participants possess the same perspectives on the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI? Was there some universal truth that could explain the enactment of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI that would help me arrive at the status of the management of SMSSCHI? How could I explore the varying views, if any that could possibly account for the current state of school management? Answering these questions reflect my leanings towards the

interpretivists' epistemology and the constructivists' understanding of reality as a lived experience, subjectively negotiated and should be examined as such. To this group of scientists, reality does not exist out there, waiting to be captured and explored: reality is lived and experienced (Creswell, 2007: Sarantakos, 2005: Patton, 2002). Reiterating the use of the interpretive paradigm, Morrison (in Coleman & Briggs, 2002), also describes the interpretive paradigm as an appropriate approach in educational research, asserting that: "...educational research needs to be grounded in people's experience..." (p.18). For Morrison, the core task of educational research is to view research participants as research subjects and to explore the "meanings" of events and phenomena from the subjects' perspectives. These observations reflect my underlying principle for the collection of data to understand the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana. My study explored issues concerned with the management of the schools and the prevailing factors that influenced the interaction between the school and agencies in its environment in the light of the implementation of the free compulsory basic education (FCUBE) educational reforms. Participants expressed "reality" in their own words, stories which were then interpreted with my theoretical framework to obtain an understanding of the status of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI in Ghana.

Third, the interpretive approach was considered appropriate for this study as the statistical basis for carrying out an unbiased quantitative research was unreliable in Ghana. Record-keeping was very minimally managed in schools, making the presence of "hard data" for use as indicators of the management systems virtually unavailable. Subsequently, the use of quantitative approaches

was problematic. Additionally, the personal views of research participants would have been minimally investigated in a discussion of the management of SMSSCHI with the use of quantitative measures hence my choice of the qualitative approach. Within the interpretive paradigm, my specific choice of method was the case study, a detailed discussion of which follows next.

Conducting the Study

Specifically, this section makes the argument for the adoption of an interpretive multi-site case-study approach to describe the nature of the day-to-day management in SMSSCHI in Ghana.

Rationale for the Case-Study.

Case studies are very difficult to define, various authors define them differently. Bryman (2005) describes a case study as a “detailed and intensive analysis of a single case” (p.48). Stake (1995) goes further, indicating that case studies are concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case in question. Contributing to the discussion, Merriam (2001) suggests that:

...while case studies can be quantitative and can test theory, in education they are more likely to be qualitative...Case studies are distinguished from other types of qualitative research in that they are intensive descriptions and analyses of a single unit or bounded system such as an individual, a program, event group, intervention or community (p.19).

A “case” then can be a community, school, individual(s) or organisations. In the first instance, this discussion highlights key attributes of my enquiry: the focus on a single group (a school), in-depth understanding (of management issues) was of particular interest to me as I tried to understand the

management of SMSSCHI in Ghana. The case study was adjudged appropriate as it allowed for the identification of rich in-depth data from the view point of those involved as they describe their current practice mainly as a result of the following arguments.

Second, each school was identified as a case using the theoretical case selection approach (Miles & Huberman, 1994) which enabled the selection of information-rich data sources for investigation. Since information on management in SMSSCHI was not readily available, I desired to visit each of the 12 SMSSCHI. However, due to my limited finances and time and the sheer enormity of the task involved, I could only access seven of the schools. Each school's data were described individually and a cross-case analysis undertaken to give an idea of the nature of management in SMSSCHI. Since my aim of studying SMSSCHI was to generate an in-depth understanding of the management of SMSSCHI, issues of representativeness were not my priority (Yin, 2004: Miles & Huberman, 1994). My major interest was in locating information-rich data sources that would help explain management issues in study schools. According to Stake (1995), it was possible to "build up in variety and create opportunities for intensive study" (p. 24) through the use of data drawn from a purposive sample of cases tailored to a study. In making the choice for the use of multi-case study, my major aim was to better understand phenomena as opposed to making comparison (Stake, 1995).

Thirdly, I postulated that the nature of the day-to-day management was to a very large extent the result of the nature of the interaction between the school and the environment. While it could be useful to attempt a description and understanding of research interests from one school, the choice of the multi-site case-study was to ensure a comprehensive examination of management of SMSSCHI within the country so as to arrive at a credible

conclusion. From the literature, the more a phenomenon occurred in different cases, the higher the likelihood for credibility in its existence (Yin, 2004: Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this direction then, the ability to locate one management function or the other in several cases or schools could lead to a more credible assessment of its existence in study schools.

Fourthly, a search of the literature revealed a paucity of studies in the area of school management within SMSSCHI. While there was a host of reviews undertaken on sector-wide provision of education in Ghana, very little research had been carried out in the area of SMSSCHI. Therefore, I reached the assumption that there was the need to delve deeply into the issues of interest to me. The literature from Ghana consistently points out the under-researched nature of SEN issues in the Ghanaian educational sector (MOESS, 2008: Casely-Hayford, 2002: Avoke, 2002). It was my expectation that findings from my generated data would help deepen the understanding of the management of special schools.

Finally, the literature points to an extensive use of case studies in addressing questions in education (Carney, 1995: Garvin, 1991: Alvarez et. al., 1990: Brearley, 1990 all cited by Tellis, 1997). Merriam (2001) asserts that case studies, especially of the descriptive kind, are very useful in “presenting basic information about areas in education where little research has been conducted” (p. 20). The choice of the interpretive paradigm was adjudged appropriate for yielding information-rich data that would enable me arrive at a comprehensive picture of the nature of management in SMSSCHI in Ghana.

The decision to adopt a case study approach was taken bearing in mind the inherent problems associated with qualitative strategies. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) have argued that one of the dangers of interpretive approaches is that: “...they become hermetically sealed from the world outside

the participants' theatre of activity –they put artificial boundaries on subjects' behaviour" (p.27). To avoid any discrepancies in the data, researchers in the interpretivists' paradigm have to consciously submit themselves to internationally acceptable procedures for the minimizing of such dangers. For me, the observance of protocols of the British Educational Research Association ([BERA], 2004) guide helped to maintain acceptable standards.

Other criticisms raised against the use of case-study in research are that they can over-simplify or exaggerate a situation, leading the reader to erroneous conclusions about the actual state of affairs: inaccuracies in data collection and interpretation arising from the sensitivity and integrity of the researcher as the main research instrument as well as the unusual problem of ethics (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). To address these objections to the approach, I subscribed to the BERA (2004) established ethical considerations and guidance from my supervisory team.

Having put my intention and research questions in perspective, it would be helpful at this point to explore the kinds of data or information that could address them (Table 2). In addition, I examined appropriate methods of data collection. The choice of research questions as evidenced from the table sought to address questions of the "what" and "how" of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. Table 2 discusses the details of research questions, the information that was sought as well as the methods used to obtain relevant data.

Table 2: Research Questions and Methods

Research Questions	Sub-questions	Type of data required	Data Collection Instrument
What is the nature of management of SMSSCHI in Ghana	1. What is the nature of management of SMSSCHI in Ghana, as outlined in POSDCoRB?	Data on school management analysed with the POSDCoRB framework	Interview with SH, ASH, HOD, SMC, SENCO. Observation of school facilities and school activities-PTA meetings, assembly, staff meetings. Documentation- school reports, examination reports.
	2. What is the state of the relationships between the SMSSCHI and local communities?	Data on school-community relationships.	Interview with SH,ASH HOD, SMC, SENCO.
	3. What is the nature of the relationships between the private sector and SMSSCHI?	Data on school- NGO relationships.	Interview with SH,ASH, HOD, SMC, SENCO.
	4. What is the nature of the relationships between the GES and SMSSCHI?	Data on school- GES relationships.	Interview with SH, ASH, HOD, SMC, SENCO.

Table 2 continued

Research Questions	Sub-questions	Type of data required	Data Collection Instrument
	5. What are the organisational challenges in the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana?	Data on management challenges: a) material conditions- equipment, parental contributions ,transport. b) staffing-recruitment, responsibilities, training, turn-over, accommodation, motivation, discipline: c) pupils- admissions, rules and rewards, prefect system participation in decision making: external relations- relationships with District Assemblies, donor agencies.	Interview with SH,ASH, HOD, SMC, SENCO. Document analysis.

Key:

1. SH-School Head teacher :
2. ASH-Deputy Head teacher :
3. HOD- Head of Department:
4. SMCC -School Management Committee Chairman:
5. SENCO- Special Education Schedule Officer from the Regional Education office in the town where study school was located.

Sampling Strategies

Identifying a sample involves decision-making about which events, settings, people and behaviours among other things to focus on (Arksey & Knight, 1999). Making such a decision requires a consideration of some criteria that will help in the achievement of set goals and demands for the study.

To gain a comprehensive picture of the status of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI, I opted to study it across the country. Arksey and Knight (1999) suggest that:

the sampling of participants should be done with great care as it could affect the information that will be collected and thus might influence the researcher's understanding and interpretation (p.56).

For this study, the school was the unit of analysis and as such all the twelve SMSCCHI located in all the ten regions of the country were of interest to me during Phase 1. The schools were purposively selected as they were the special state-maintained schools which served as the setting for the management issues of interest to me. I opted to visit as many schools as I could during the two-month time I had for data collection. This decision was basically an opportunity to get baseline information to shape the study during the lengthier, more-in-depth study during Phase 2 as there was a paucity of relevant data or statistics that I could refer to ground my assumptions.

Drawing from the generic funnelling sampling sequence (Miles & Huberman, 1994), I selected the initial case samples for visits. This sequencing describes the selection of cases within cases. Using the dictates of

the theory, the country was divided into three zones: the northern, central and southern zones and schools chosen for visits (refer to Appendix C). Two schools out of four were chosen in the northern zone. Schools visited in the northern zone were selected because they were relatively newly established and were sited in areas described by the Ghana Education Service (GES) as deprived. I was interested in establishing possible links between management structures and geographical location. Again, I was curious to identify how the socio-economic status of school sites motivated school management.

In the central zone, two schools out of four were theoretically included. The choice of the schools was backed by their active presence in the education of CHI in the country from the time of SEN inception in 1947 up to 2007. In the southern section, three schools out of four were selected mainly because these schools were the earliest to be established and it was anticipated that interesting trends in management were likely to emerge due to an established management structure and patterns of management practice.

It should be noted that the remaining five schools were not purposely excluded from the sample set from the beginning of the study visits. The initial design was to visit all schools since there were only twelve of them in the country. However, the location of the schools were so sprawled that visiting all of them turned out to be too enormous a task within the constraints of finances and time at my disposal. I therefore truncated visits at the end of the two month period I had allotted for data collection. Again, this decision was highly influenced by the fact that schools were fairly homogenous in the management issues under investigation and the more schools I visited, the greater the impression that I was getting more of the same. To explain further, I was

surprised on reaching the third school, to realise that the SH for the first school visited had already been in contact with the SH. The answers I obtained for my probing indicated that the SH was aware of my study. This was a worry as I felt that information I was going to collect was going to be mis-represented. The decision to interview SENCO officers was therefore a wise precaution as their views could be used to verify whatever data were realised from school visits.

Within each school, I purposively invited participants who were the people involved in the day-to-day management of the school and were considered rich sources of information to inform the study. By definition, the composition of the School Management Committee (SMC) was much larger than the people interviewed. However, the reports of various educational reviews point to the limited inclusion of all members of the committee in the operation of their assigned functions (MOESS, 2008: MOESS, 2002). Moreover, the peculiar location of special schools outside the main townships where schools were located meant that it was very difficult for other stakeholders in the SMC to be actively involved in school management as dictated by policy.

For HODs, the school heads invariably nominated one participant. This process of participant selection draws from the thoughts of Silverman (2006):

...selecting groups of categories to study on the basis of their relevance to the research questions,... theoretical positions...the explanation of the account which you are developing...theoretical sampling is concerned

with constructing a sample ...meaningful theoretically, because it builds in certain characteristics or criteria which help to develop and test your theory and explanations (p.252).

Participants were therefore invited to be involved in the study based on their ability to bring their experiences and expertise to bear on the status of management in SMSSCHI.

In addition to the school leadership, Special Education officers (SENCO) from the GES who were judged to possess information on the management of schools were purposively sampled and interviewed to provide useful insights into the status of the relationships that existed between their outfit and SMSSCHI. In all 30 participants were purposively sampled and interviewed and their profile is set out in Table 3. I masked the identities of schools by using fruit names for their representation.

Table 3: Distribution of Participants by School and Designation

School	Zone	SH	ASH	HOD	SMCC	SENCO	Total
Orange	1	1	1	1	1	1	5
Pineapple	1	1	1	1		1	4
Mango	2	1	1	1		1	4
Pawpaw	2	1	1	1		1	4
Melon	3	1	1	1	1	1	5
Coconut	3	1	1	1		1	4
Pear	3	1	1	1		1	4
Total		7	7	7	2	7	30

Instrumentation. The decision to make a choice of data gathering techniques depends on a number of determinants that will enable the

acquisition of the best information to address research questions (Cohen et al., 2005; Patton, 2002). For me, my main goal for carrying out this study was to gain an understanding of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI from managers of the school system, using the primary data collection tool as the interview. I supported this technique with secondary tools of observation and document analysis to obtain a rich description of the nature of SMSSCHI in Ghana.

Semi-Structured Interviews. This study set out to map out the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI and describe its nature. As the study was situated in a largely unexplored area in the Ghanaian educational sector, I decided to “bound” it through the use of semi-structured interviews. The interviews were to capture participants’ “...more personal, private and special understandings” (Arksey & Knight 1999; p.4). The potency of interviews as a data collection tool was highlighted by Patton who suggested that:

...we cannot observe feelings, thoughts and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some previous point in time ...the purpose of interviewing then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective (2002; p.72).

Participants were encouraged to talk about management practices that took place in the daily management of school activities in face-to-face sessions. In all instances with school heads, interviews were interrupted to enable them attend to some emergency issues. This had significant importance to my data collection as the interruptions ‘lived’ the description of the enactment of management functions in the schools. As Davies (1997) cited in Crossley and

Vulliamy (1997) suggests: “sometimes, the interruptions give a direct lead into the data required...” (p.141). For instance, in one incidence, an opinion leader from the community in which one school was sited, came into the school head’s (SH) office to plead for clemency on behalf of one labourer who had been released from the school’s services to the District Director of Education (DDE) for non-performance and persistent absenteeism. From this brief diversion, it was interesting to observe and learn from the interaction that took place. I was directly given a demonstration of many management functions all at the same time. Glimpses of the authority of the SH, official and hidden discipline policies as well the school-community relationships were displayed. The communication exchange also gave a clue to the communication culture of the school as well as the community.

Secondly, the use of the interview guide was to ensure that there was a systematic and comprehensive probing of the study participants by the delimitation of the issues that had to be investigated in advance. To promote this idea in my study, my participants were given the opportunity to freely express themselves on what they felt was important whilst further probing and exploring responses to facilitate the emergence of other insights of the management issues of interest to me.

The interview guide adopted for this study featured open-ended questions that explored the “how?”, “who?”, “why?”, “when?” and “what?” of management issues. In making the choice of the items on the interview schedule, I took cognisance of van de Mescht’s (2002) caution to researchers to be aware that strong personal agendas could compromise interpretive enquiry, stressing that:

...questions ...too strongly located within a preconceived theoretical framework, allowing little space in which participants might elaborate and through language, metaphor, anecdote and symbol begin to give meaning to reality (p.47).

The interview guide fused concepts from the POSDCoRB framework and boundary theory (Appendix D) as a diagnostic tool for an analysis of the management of SMSSCHI. The instrument had mainly open-ended questions related to school management such as: “Who is responsible for the planning of school activities? To what extent are teachers involved in decision-making in study schools? Do pupils play any role in the day-to-day organisation of school activities? How do you assess the relationship between the school and the community?” Participants were asked similar questions and encouraged to freely express their views on management issues.

Group Interview. For the SENCO group I had to adopt a group interview approach. I had originally set out to use the one-to-one interview technique with all participants. However, at the time of the data collection, it emerged that SENCOs were not available in their offices in their respective districts. With permission from the organisers, I engaged the SENCOs who were camped at the National Training Institute for the Ghana Education Service (GES) for an annual conference in a group interview.

The group interviews were very useful for a number of reasons. It was very practical to meet this entire group of participants in one setting. These were people who had been working together in one way or the other and together were the embodiment of useful information of the management of

SMSSCHI. I was able to gain substantive information in a short space of time, cutting the expense and time needed (Cohen et al., 2005; Patton, 2002). Participants could site different examples from different settings to explain management issues and thus helped me to gain a deeper understanding of issues from their viewpoint. I was careful to avoid the anticipated shortcoming of group interview where individuals with strong opinions were liable to dominate proceedings and exclude others. This was done by giving members a turn each to give their views about issues that we discussed (Cohen et al., 2005; Patton, 2002).

Observation. The study was basically designed to obtain the bulk of the data from interviews. To increase the credibility of qualitative measures the literature recommends the adoption of multiple methods to address the same research questions (Cohen et al., 2005; Knight, 2002; Patton, 2002; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). I opted to include observation in the data collection procedures.

The justification for the use of observation was to reduce the shortcomings of the interview approach, helping to validate interview data. The use of this approach allowed me to use a cross-case comparison during the analysis stage to increase the robustness and richness of data collected. The numbers of schools visited (multi-site or multi-case approach), helped to establish trends to give soundness to whatever impressions I had picked up. To strengthen my impressions, I captured some activities through photographs. The detailed justification for the use of photographs is done later in this section.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork process was influenced by my understanding that the process was an interpretive process rather than a simple auditory or visual reality which I was engaging with (Van Maanen, 1983). Over the data collection period, aspects of the ethnography approach emerged through the reality of school management was enacted during fieldwork.

School Visits. Fieldwork commenced with visits to seven out of the 12 SMSSCHI in Ghana. Visits took place between March and May, 2007. The fieldwork process was initially planned for four weeks. Holidays, unexpected challenges like rains and transportation difficulties stretched the period from late March to May. Table 4 presents an overview of field work activities.

Table 4: Schedule for Phase 1 Data Collection March-May 2007

Date (2007)	Location	Activities
26/03-30/03	School 1	Make telephone contact with participants.
31/03-04/04	School 2	Visit officer in charge-Regional/District Education Office.
23/04/-03/05	School 3	Visit to school.
05/05- 09/05	School 4	1. Interview with SH, ASH, HOD.
09/05-11/05	School 5	2. Informal chats with other school personnel.
12/05-16/05	School 6	3. Collect documents for analyses.
16/05-19/05	School 7	4. Observation of some school activities.
		5. Interview with SMC Chair where available.

Gaining Access. According to the norms of educational management in Ghana, before a researcher can enter any school site to conduct a research, protocol demands that the authorising stakeholder be informed of such

intentions. For Davies (1977) cited in Crossley and Vulliamy (1997), the question of access, arrangement and arrival incidences are critical for data collection, helping to set the tone for subsequent interviewing. For my study, I gained access to the SMSSCHI by personally contacting the Director of the Special Education (SpEd) Division of the GES with an introductory letter from the Department of Education, University of Bath (Appendix F) which explained the purpose for the data collection. The personal interaction helped to ensure some bonding and rapport with the national management executive in charge of SEN. I further submitted a letter (Appendix G) to obtain consent from the Directorate to conduct data collection activities.

I was warmly received by the Deputy-Director in charge of Special Education who then handed me over to the next deputy officer in charge of operations to offer further help. For instance, I was given the contact information for all the schools. This was especially helpful as it turned out that the official telephone lines of most schools were not functional and SHs had to be contacted on their personal cell phones. I was given verbal permission to visit the schools as I desired. However, I was mandated to report to the District Director of Education (DDE) of the each district in which study schools were located. As explained in Chapter 2, all pre-tertiary educational institutions operating within a district were directly under the management jurisdiction of the DDE in the implementation of government decentralisation policy. As to how management oversight of special schools was enacted in reality, the detailed report in the findings section will describe it.

In addition, the personal introduction to educational management authorities at the various management levels was to help reduce the sense of

intrusion in districts and schools. In some instances, some school practitioners expressed a subtle fear of inquiry. This reaction was sometimes carried over to my asking questions concerning the day to day management activities of the school.

After meeting with a specific DDE, I then telephoned the various school head(s) within the district to schedule visits, filled with excitement and anticipation as I prepared to visits to collect data. I worried over participants' reactions to my probing and my own capabilities in collecting the right kinds of information. How was I to know that reactions were the least of my worries! The greatest challenge came from the travelling and local living conditions in the places I visited and. Some incidences are reported on in the case study section of this report.

On reaching a school, after observing all protocol, I made requests for statements of the school's vision and mission statements, newspaper clippings, brochures, reports, annual reports to the GES and NGOs, and examination reports and any other written material describing the school and its management. With the help of the SH, I then scheduled individual interview times with the ASH and an HOD and the school management committee chair (SMCC) where possible. With each participant, I indicated my techniques of insuring anonymity, plans for the storage and use of information given to me, as well as the details of the research indicators outlined in my interview schedule.

Gaining Informed Consent. To ensure interview protocols with my participants, I gave each a letter that described the procedures I was taking to ensure their anonymity. My letter requested participants to read and decide

whether they were willing to engage with me (Appendix H). The agreement to sign the document ensured the informed consent from each participant, giving me the go-ahead to conduct interviews. I further assured participants that they were not only free to disagree to grant interviews but also had the right to withdraw from the interview at any point they felt uncomfortable with my probing.

The Interviewing Session. For each school visited, I conducted 40-minute face-to-face interviews with the SH, ASH, HOD, School Management Committee Chairman (where accessible). All interviews were held in private and were mostly conducted in the offices of the SH, ASH and in the case of HODs in their classrooms during break periods when children were out on some other activities.

The SENCO officers for each of the schools from the local education directorate had to be interviewed on another occasion. I had to change my strategy of interacting with each SENCO in their home district as they were not available. At the time of data collection, SENCO officers were in residence at a GES training institute, undertaking an annual review of the field practice of SEN in Ghana. I sought permission from the organisers and interviewed these officers at the training institute.

Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide to keep probing on track whilst giving participants the chance to talk freely about relevant issues (refer to Appendix G). Responses were tape-recorded for later verbatim transcription.

The Observation Sessions. During the two full school days (8am to 2pm) I spent in each school, I also observed some school activities including Parent

Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, staff meetings and lessons in progress. Information gathered through observation was written up in a diary, providing additional viewpoints to my understanding of the management of SMSSCHI. I tailored my observation with items included on the interview guide to keep me on track. For instance, during staff meetings, I was interested among other things in who chaired the meeting, how teachers reported to the meeting and how decisions were arrived at. The thrust for the observations were to give me a personal insight into the practice of the day-to-day management of schools.

Record Keeping. One of the critical activities in the data collection process is record keeping that facilitates analysis. Of the various techniques identified in the literature (Cohen et al., 2005; Patton, 2002), I opted to use field notes, diary-keeping and photographs. A discussion of these techniques follows next.

Field Notes. As part of my data collection procedures, I kept a diary to record my impressions and thoughts of the management practices as they unfolded in the field (Appendix H). The field notes served as a representation of events, places and people that I engaged with. I repeatedly reviewed these written documentations to inform my decision making during fieldwork (Cohen et al., 2005; Knight, 2002; Patton, 2002).

Photographic Documentation. Photographic documentation was chosen as another record keeping technique (Appendix H1-H9). The use of photo documentation in observation was of varying importance (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

First, photographs provided a readily available reference whenever needed and helped to stir the researcher's memory when necessary (Knight, 2002). This was exceptionally useful during the analysis stage.

Second, photography, like other visual data, leaves an opportunity for collaboration around the data material with research colleagues or participants. This collaboration in the study is an opportunity for challenging imageries and biases and thus enhances robustness.

Third, while field notes were often regarded as personal and private documents, which were rarely shared with others, visual data like video and photography were easy to share and could be used for collaborative research. Fourthly, photographs were useful for collaboration during data collection, analysis and interpretation. For this study, photographic documentation of some school scenes and school activities included school signboards, buildings, playgrounds, staff meetings, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, and lessons in progress. The pictures served as a reminder of interesting and relevant cues that helped in understanding and description during the various stages of the data collection process. Data from the photography were also used during member-checking in the Phase 2 of data collection period to enhance the validity of research findings. Finally, during the reporting of research findings, the photographs were used to help verify that the researcher was actually on site. Photographs taken served as visual stimulation and illustrated some of the management issues to readers who might not be conversant with study sites enabling them to see reality lived out in the photographs (refer to Appendix H1-H9).

In spite of the gains of the use of photography during data collection, not all participants were comfortable with the practice. In two instances, SHs followed me round, trying to dictate what I could photograph and what I could not. This act hindered to a large extent my freedom to capture some interesting incidences related to the practice of the day-to-day management functions I was investigating.

Document Analysis. Achieving the credibility of my study was a priority right from the inception stage. To further deepen the richness of data, I examined a number of documents relating to the management of SMSSCHI including enrolment trends from the 2006/2007 to 2009/2010 academic years, brief histories of the schools, strategic plans, school rules and regulations, policy documents and sample reports from the GES headquarters. The basic advantage for the use of documents in data collection is described as not intruding: "... upon or alter the setting in ways that the investigator might" (Merriam & Associates, 2002; p.13). Again, the documents helped to validate the information picked up through the other research methods.

Ensuring Credibility

The issue of quality in qualitative research as an alternative paradigm to quantitative research concerns the question of: "how can an enquirer persuade his or her audience that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; p. 290). Answering these questions make the case for a qualitative inquiry to be judged using such terms like "Credibility", "Neutrality", "Confirmability", "Consistency", "Dependability", "Applicability" and "Transferability". These concepts identified issues that can be discussed to give readers the confidence to accept the conclusions from

a study (ibid). Other features including, “trustworthiness”, “authenticity”, and “credibility” (Bryman, 2005; Creswell, 2003) are identified in the literature. Again, some techniques identified included: multiple use of data sources and data collection instruments, rich, thick description, bias, prolonged time in the field, peer debriefing, external auditor (Bryman, 2005; Creswell, 2003). According to Silverman (2006):

...unless you can convince your audience that the procedures you used did ensure that your methods are reliable and that your conclusions were valid, there is little point in aiming to conclude a research study (p.310).

I do not make a claim for the replication of my study or that the same findings can result from such replication by another researcher or even by me. As this study was a qualitative one and examined the enactment of a social phenomenon (management of special settings) it will not be possible for participants’ actions and reactions to be controlled in order to reproduce the same results should the study be replicated. That kind of control cannot be expected in a description of naturally occurring incidences from which I draw conclusions. Various techniques undertaken during the data collection, analysis reporting and meaning making phases to ensure the quality of findings i.e. that findings were believable, correct and trustworthy are presented next (Bryman, 2005; Creswell, 2003).

Multiple Methods Approach. Widely acclaimed as a technique through which credibility can be ensured in qualitative research work triangulation is a concept which is reputed to promote confirmation and completeness

(Silverman, 2007; Yin, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). I decided to use three types of triangulation to obtain data.

Data source triangulation involved asking different members of the SMC similar questions on the day-to-day management functions in schools. Secondly, multi-methods approach involving the use of interviews, observation and documentation enabled different data information on the same management functions to be obtained. The approach helped to authenticate and enrich findings on school management. The third strategy I used was multi-theory to guide the study. Drawing from the literature and my understanding of the associated mechanistic nature of the POSDCoRB framework, I compensated for the shortcoming by the use of the boundary theory. The compensation elicited a robust data from which I could make conclusions on the state of the day-to-day management of study schools. I found it interesting that even though in the majority, the data from the various multiple processes agreed with each other, there were occasions where variances occurred (Creswell, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994). For instance, while school management in most cases indicated an active involvement of NGOs in school management, SENCO officials sampled indicated a very narrow interaction between themselves and the school. Multiple methods served to validate any conclusions I reached regarding the management issues of interest to me. In support of this view, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) assert that:

...no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors. Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical

reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed...I now offer as a final methodological rule the principle that multiple methods should be used in every investigation... (p. 28).

The use of multiple techniques also helped to reduce my personal bias and to keep probing on a systematic track, thus ensuring credibility in the study findings.

Thick Rich Description/Participant Language Verbatim Accounts.

The research report is written up with a detailed account of contextual information involving a thick, rich description of discussion of findings (Creswell, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The study report is presented with original quotes drawn from interview extracts and study diary that offered verbatim accounts of the management practices in study schools.

Prolonged and Persistent Time in the Field. The study adopted long sessions of engagement with research sites and participants, spanning periods over one academic year. I engaged in interaction with study sites through on-site visits and telephone interaction, aiding me to be saturated with important details of the day-to-day school management in schools.

Mechanically Recorded Data. The use of diaries, tape recording during interviews and photographs provided a ready and permanent reference data for analysis. This mechanical data helped to reduce errors that I might have committed had I relied solely on recall and the short notes I had made as I listened to participants. The literature suggests that conducting research in the qualitative paradigm could be a highly subjective process as the researcher was the main data collection instrument. Recording information with

mechanical tools helps to preserve understandings and perceptions such that the data could display some consistency (Bryman, 2005; Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Participant Review. During the interview processes, the study utilized participant review. The process involved my periodically asking for further clarification from participants to validate my understanding of on-going discussions. For instance during three interviewing sessions, participants kept on referring to parents “*dumping*” their children in the schools. I sought further clarification on this and it emerged that some parents virtually severed all contacts with children once they were accepted into the school for the term.

Additionally, I sometimes sought validation of some conclusions in subsequent meetings after a review of the day’s data suggested some lines that may need further clarification. Through this process, participants were afforded further opportunity to clarify previously proffered observations by adding, detracting or refining their expressed opinions. For me, I obtained other opportunities to deepen my understanding of responses, reducing the impact of my own interpretations on the data.

Discrepant or Negative Data. Throughout data collection and analysis, I sought out the deviant and negative or discrepant cases compared to the theoretical stance of the study (Bryman, 2005; Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002). Such cases were further probed to identify causative factors and how these displayed exceptions to the identified patterns as well as how they impinged on the study.

Generalisability of Findings.

The study employed a multi-site case study approach with purposeful sampling to obtain data to address research questions. My major priority was to pursue a comprehensive understanding of management issues and not representativeness. As such the study did not aim to generalise findings from sample to population. The aim was to examine social phenomena through various experiences and perspectives using “exemplifying cases” (Bryman, 2005; p.51) to develop a theoretical understanding of the management of SMSSCHI.

The literature on the qualitative paradigm reiterates the contributions qualitative research paradigm makes to in-depth understanding of phenomena. For Yin (2004), case studies are “generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes” (p.11). To expound, unlike the sample in an experiment, case studies do not represent a sample. Their objective is to expand and generalise theories (that is, analytic generalisation and not to enumerate frequencies (statistic generalisation). Analytic generalisation describes the use of a previously developed theory as a template with which empirical results of a case study can be compared (Yin, 2004). For my data analysis I continuously projected my findings with the POSDCoRB framework as well as boundary theory on issues in the day-to-day school management of study schools. My principle aim in this process was to expand the theory on the ways in which we make meaning of the day-to-day school management in special settings in education. In view of this priority, the usual empirical generalisation of findings can only be done advisedly. As the proportion of schools I had interacted with was quite high, generalisation

could be done to similar SEN settings in Ghana, i.e. a case-to-case inference as well as to the theories that guided the study (Silverman, 2006; Bryman, 2005; Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002; Merriam, 1998).

Ethical Issues

To address ethical concerns, this study was conducted in line with the British Educational Research Association ([BERA] 2004) Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research. Silverman (2007) notes that professional associations would usually set out guidelines that its members must comply with to inform their practice.

In addition to these guidelines, the MPhil to PhD transfer process operated within the Department of Education at the University of Bath subjected my research intentions with particular emphasis on my research questions and data collection procedures to scrutiny. The acceptance of the professionals that did the assessment of the research proposal for the study to be conducted indicated that the designed study conformed to established procedures. Ethical considerations for this study are discussed with a focus on four main areas in confidentiality, relational, ecological and confidentiality issues in the subsequent section.

Confidentiality, Privacy and Dignity. One major technique to ensure ethics in my study was to ensure that data collected were protected from unauthorised use. I codified participants' answers and schools were equally assigned synonyms. I personally transcribed all interviews with a colleague being asked to read through documents with codified identifiers to establish the readability of scripts. Codes that identified data from individual cases were given to ensure anonymity and the use of cross-case analysis reduced the

possibility of personal identification. This I hoped would promote trust between me and my participants. The choice to include confidentiality concerns was taken in recognition of the codes of BERA (2004) which states that: “the confidential and anonymous treatment of participants’ data is considered a norm for the conduct of the research” (p.8).

Relational Issues. In all my data collection activities, I reflected a caring attitude towards interviewees, bearing in mind the feeling of intrusion that could result from the examination of daily activities by an outsider. For instance, when it came to issues of budgeting I had to be careful not to ask too many details of the quantum of funding that came to school administration as traditionally in Ghana, people find it intrusive for detailed enquiries about funding and expenditures.

Ecological Issues. I analysed and understood emerging issues from the participants’ culture and also the larger community in which the school site was located. In some instances, for example, two ASHs displayed some unease with the leadership of their SH. This uneasiness, I later interpreted to be an expression of the prevailing culture that recognized male superiority making it difficult for males to readily accept the leadership of a female.

Data Analysis Procedures

The literature points to the use of a diversity of techniques that could be used to organise data and so help with analysis. These methods or techniques exist in different ways and may be used to transform, interpret and make meaning of qualitative data (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 1998).

The data analysis phase in a qualitative study is not a discrete phase as happens with quantitative measures. The data phase for this study was an

iterative process, intimately intertwined with all the other processes of the research. However, it was useful for the researcher to detail for his or her audience the steps that were followed to obtain findings (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 1998). For this study, analysis was a dynamic process that included the processes of examination of data, trying out different ideas, eliminating ideas, and expanding upon others before arriving at any conclusions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Data Analysis and Fieldwork was an Iterative Activity

During fieldwork, my analysis was an iterative activity, a process that is typical of qualitative studies (Corbin & Strauss, 2008: Creswell, 1998). I commenced my case study, drawing from the grounded theory approach with a designed and a data collection framework with which to harvest relevant data that would help me address the research questions. As I progressed with the data collection activities in the study settings, I gradually starting gaining the impression that other participants and incidences could further illuminate issues of interest. Corbin and Strauss (2008) explain that the analysis process is one of generating, developing, and verifying concepts. This process took place over time and resulted in the acquisition of data. During the process, concepts were derived from first pieces of data which were then compared for similarities and differences in the next set of data. Following from there, concepts were expanded by “...adding new properties and dimensions if there are new ideas in the data, adding new concepts to the list of concepts...” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 57).

Moreover, the process of the researcher collecting data, pausing for reflection and going back for further data collection was a logical step to

overcoming superficial data collection as in the process, an opportunity is afforded for the researcher to refine themes, concepts as well as theoretical frameworks (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 1998). The reflective periods spent away from study sites helped me to clarify my thoughts and procedures as well as possibilities in arriving at an interesting stock of data.

Transcription was Another Analytic Stage

At the end of the set two-month period for data collection, I truncated the data collection process as my budget was depleted and I had to return to University of Bath to continue with my studies. Again, the repetitions in the data suggested that I was experiencing data saturation. On return to the campus, my focus turned to transcribing the interviews. The transcription stage allowed me to get closer to the data, and through the process, assign responses to the relevant matrix within the pre-designed analytical framework. For Corbin and Strauss (2008), the transcribing process, though a time consuming process, informs the early stages of analysis and helps the researcher gain a more intimate understanding of the data.

Transforming talk to written text was a representation that involved the selection and reduction of the data, a process of interpreting data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The process involved the researcher selecting from the data what appeared relevant and how detailed the transcription should be. The research questions and the preferred analytical approach determined the level of details to be included in a transcript (Silverman, 2007). For this study, all interviews were transcribed verbatim and then examined to identify issues that were relevant to the analytical framework.

To further explore meaning in the data, I adopted the variable and case oriented approaches. Data collection was simultaneously done along with data analysis. This process was in line with what Creswell (2003) quoting Rossman and Rallis (1998) calls an “on-going process” (p.190). Within this approach, the researcher did a continual reflection and evaluation of the data, asking questions and writing down thoughts and memos during the conduct of the study. This process of analysis adopting the tradition of Miles and Huberman’s (1994) model for qualitative analysis is summarised in three waves as:

1. data reduction through an examination and re-examination of the transcripts, compressing and reducing the information without losing the key message:
2. data displaying process which involves the summary of information on a data display sheet
3. Drawing conclusions is the third step. This step involves drawing conclusions on the responses from the other cases, verifying them with conclusions from observation and data from documents.

Utilising the variable and case-oriented approaches, I put the data in clusters outlined in the conceptual analytical framework for POSDCoRB and boundary management. The details of the analysis for the various data sources are presented in the following sub-sections.

Analysis of Interviews

Employing the data display matrices in the POSDCoRB format, I displayed the information for the SH, ASH, HOD and SMCC for the first study site. This approach displayed all the required information on a single sheet, enabling me to compare responses, picking up trends (Creswell, 2004;

Miles & Huberman, 1994), convergences and divergences in expressed opinions (Appendix J). Having engaged with the initial data this way, all the other transcript data were compressed into matrixes which examined one aspect of the POSDCoRB framework, the main focus for of the study. For instance, one matrix displayed data for P-Planning with the details answering questions of “who?”, “when?”, “what?” and “where?” of the planning that went on in schools (refer to Appendix J). In drawing up the matrices, abbreviations, direct quotes, short texts and phrases were used to input the data under each sub-heading, enabling a variable and case analysis of the issues under study.

Variable Oriented Analysis

The conduct of the variable analysis of the data display matrix involved the vertical scanning of the table, establishing links between identified data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For instance, drawing the link between participants’ answers for “who”? , “what?”, “when?”, “where?”, “why?” of the “P” or planning of the POSDCoRB framework as a variable could be done. The responses for all SHs across the seven schools for planning for example could be ascertained with a vertical reading of the matrix. While this was a useful approach, the meaning that could be attributed to the established links was only of a limited utility (Miles & Huberman, 1994), as the causative factors that could explain relationships were concealed. To address this short-coming, the case oriented approach was used.

Case-oriented Analysis

The adoption of the case oriented approach in the use of data matrixes concerns the reading of tables horizontally across rows. This helped me to do a

detailed examination of each case, trying to locate the reasons behind relationships. Through this, I built a sense of the trend or pattern in the data that showed linkages or relationships (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The case oriented approach enabled the detailed analysis of the convergences and divergences in trends within and between cases, such that the identification of deviant cases or outliers that did or did not meet study assumptions, the theory or literature could be done. As noted from the literature, this process helped to strengthen the theoretical basis of the study (Creswell, 2004; Silverman, 2004).

Analysis of Photographs

As indicated elsewhere in this chapter, photographs as part of electronic inputs in data collection helped to provide a ready and permanent resource for data analysis. Drawing from the visual content analysis, I examined pictures for trends, helping me to clarify my thoughts on field notes and transcripts (Creswell, 2004; Silverman, 2003). In one instance, a photograph helped me to recall and substantiate the differing responses I obtained from one SH on management in the school. While the SH and the other members of the management team talked with enthusiasm on their roles in the school, pictures of the school compound revealed issues of health and safety that suggested the lack of attention to this facet of school management.

Analysis of Documents

I collected and examined relevant documentation including short histories, strategic plans, and school reports from schools. All these primary data provided an understanding of the settings within which this study took place, helping to “frame” or “bound” the study. Official documents from the

Ghana Education Service (GES) and study reports from some international research consortiums provided a further empirical illumination of the varying facets of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI in Ghana.

Drawing from the qualitative content analysis approach (Creswell, 2004; Silverman, 2003), I identified relevant information then compressed and organised it in relation to the conceptual analytical framework (data reduction), and displayed it in categories (data display) and drew conclusions on the basis of the obtained data. This data was used to verify findings from the interview and observation data.

Analysis of SENCO Officials' Data

Questions posed to SENCO officials had to be modified from the semi-structured interview guide used for data collection. The number of this group of participants was small and initial discussions revealed that they were not officially located on the decision making machinery of the schools. Interviews were more open-ended and participants' views were told in stories. Content analysis was then done to bring out their opinions on issues involving school management and educational trends in SMSSCHI from its inception to the present (Creswell, 2004; Silverman, 2003). The obtained data were used to verify the responses of school management, helping to provide a comprehensive view of management as practised in SMSSCHI in Ghana. For example when asked to give their views on the relationships between the schools and the Ghana Education Service (GES), the initial response was "it was good". With further probing, participants gave instances that suggested something of the reverse. The conclusion here was that SHs were sometimes not open to the inputs from the SENCOs as their visits to schools were

sometimes seen as intrusions on “private property”. This conclusion was at variance with the responses from SHs who reported a very close collaboration with SENCOS.

A summary of the research processes, showing the flow from the initial literature review to data analysis is illustrated in Fig. 2 below.

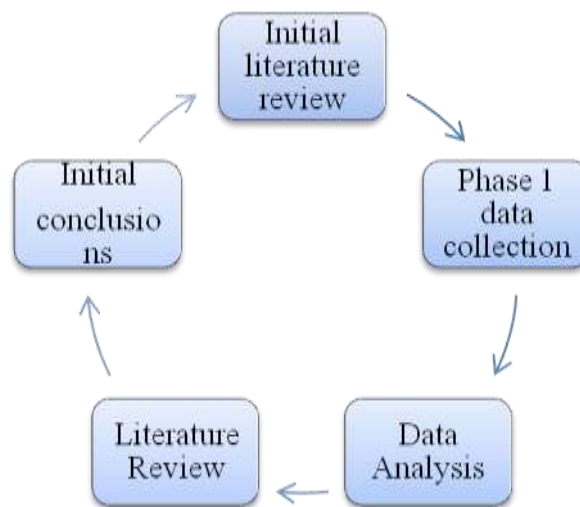


Fig 2: Summary of Processes for Phase 1

Reflections on My Role in the Research

Without doubt, every research enquiry demands that the researcher be actively engaged in intensive and sustained interaction with a participant or participants. This situation is more pronounced in the use of qualitative approaches where the researcher is the major data collection instrument. Creswell, quoting Locke et. al. (2000), suggests that this imposes a number of: “...strategic, ethical, and personal issues into the qualitative research process” (p.184). To this end the researcher needs to explicitly indicate their values, biases and personal interests about the study topic and processes. The ensuing

discussion focuses on ways (my bias, my status, gaining access, ethical issues) through which I engaged with participants throughout the study.

My Bias

As stated earlier in Chapter 1, I approached this study with basic training in the education of the CHI and Educational Administration and Management. With my personal experiences of disability and the exclusion I experienced at the basic school level, I had a passion to explore the management of special schools and its probable linkages to educational outcomes of children with disabilities. With this passion, I acknowledged I had to consciously make the effort to subject myself to the guiding principles of the ethics outlined by BERA (2004) and general principles of the GES for conducting research in schools in Ghana.

My Status

As a Ghanaian conducting a study in a local setting, acceptance from participants were mixed. In all meetings, I always introduced myself as a teacher and a student studying outside the country. My status as a teacher in some cases broke the ice, helping participants especially ASHs and HODs to become friendly. When I mentioned that I was studying outside the country however, some participants made some snide remarks about my being one of the privileged few and a sense of withdrawal was experienced. I immediately stressed the limited experience I had within the field of SEN and my passion for the welfare of CWD and this in most cases restored rapport and a return of the warmth of proceedings as participants identified a common passion.

Reflections on Fieldwork

Every research is accomplished alongside one problem or the other. This study was equally faced with some challenges which are discussed next.

Access to participants. Making contacts with school management was a fairly straight forward process as the core membership could be found on school premises. Getting access to other members of the SMC was another challenge. As schools had a wide catchment area, most members of the SMC were located far away from school premises. Making contact was therefore very problematic leading to only two of SMC chairpersons being accessible for interviewing.

Access to Research Sites. About half of study sites were highly inaccessible due to the extremely long distances from the researcher's base. This greatly affected the projected budgeting and subsequently the inability to access all schools during Phase 1.

Access to Official Documentation. This was the greatest challenge faced during data collection. Official documentation especially from the GES was very problematic. In relation to this observation, Agyeman, Baku and Gbadamosi (2000) conclude in a study of the documentation within the GES that while more than 3000 research studies were recorded to have been conducted in the basic education, his team could only get access to only 300. I therefore had to rely on accessing official documentation from colleagues' personal libraries and from the websites of multi-national bodies like the World Health Organisation (WHO) and United Nations (UN). Again, as has been previously indicated in Chapter 1 and earlier in this chapter discussion,

documentation was very limited in schools and administrative offices. I had to repeatedly scour schools and offices to find any meaningful information.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF PHASE 1 DATA

Overview

This chapter presents the data drawing from the initial research questions. Data was obtained from semi-structured interviews, observation and document search collected in line with the questions. The discussion is written up in six sections: (1) a write-up on the study schools (2) a description of participants (3) the nature of management (POSDCoRB) in SMSSCHI (4) challenges to school management, (5) links to stakeholders and (6) the conclusion for the chapter.

Case Studies

The schools which were visited for data harvesting are described briefly in the first part of this chapter. All seven schools were visited during Phase 1.

Case Study School 1- The Orange School

The Orange School is located in a part of Ghana which occupies roughly 70, 383 square kilometres: a land area reputed to be the largest of all the regions in the country and was the setting where the study was piloted. The land is mostly low lying except in the north-eastern and western corners which are dotted with some escarpment.

People here are mostly peasant farmers, though a large majority of the able bodied youth have left to look for more lucrative jobs down south, hindering commercial activities and making this part of Ghana one of the four poorest regions. The majority of the people living are Moslems who in earlier times shunned formal education since they saw it to be “christianisation” of their children.

Reflecting the general perception of people with disabilities (PWD) in Ghana as a curse or punishment from the gods, PWDs are relegated to the background. Parents see PWDs as not being able to contribute anything to the economic well-being of the family and therefore are very reluctant to spend scarce money on their education (SH, 2008; Asiedu-Akrofi, 1978). Various aggressive and intensive educational campaigns and initiatives have gradually led to an increased demand for formal education for children with hearing impairment (CHI). At the time of the Phase 1 visit, for instance, a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) had brought some CHI and their families together and organised a day’s trip to the school for a day’s interaction as a way of encouraging parents to enrol their children in the school.

Established 30 years ago as a mainstream school, by the 2006/2007 academic year, the enrolment was 248 pupils. This number shows an increase in numbers from 227 in the 2003/2004 academic year. This increase, the SH attributes to an increased awareness created throughout the catchment area of the benefits of education for CHI. This number could have been more but facilities at the school were overstretched as it were to accommodate the current numbers, confirming the assertion that only about 0.6% of persons with disabilities (PWDs) are benefiting from formal education in Ghana

(Ohene, 2006). The school had a large catchment area, serving eighteen (18) districts within the region. This means places were few and there was a long waiting list for CHI to be placed.

There was a trained teaching staff of 24 which meant that pupil-teacher ratios were very high, exceeding the recommended maximum ratio of 12-to-1, a fact which in the view of teachers was subsequently impacting the quality of the teaching-learning transaction in the classroom. In order to help minimise the negative effect of this, the SH had recruited some adult deaf who were alumni of the school to serve as teaching assistants. From time to time, the school benefited from volunteers from other countries who participated in various roles. At the time of the Phase 1 visit for instance, there was a volunteer from the Peace Corps who was scheduled to be with the school for two years, assisting in the teaching of Art and Crafts. Another volunteer came in periodically to help with screening within the catchment area as well as the school to formally determine the hearing levels of children with suspected hearing impairments. Again, the University of Education, Winneba, which trains special education teachers in the country, was operating a year's internship or work-place experience scheme for teachers in training within schools across the country, helping to reduce problems associated with teacher shortage.

Case Study School 2 - The Pineapple School

The Pineapple School is situated within a region with land that is relatively flat but has a few hills to the east and southeast, with a total area of about 8,842 sq km, representing 2.7 per cent of the total land area of the Ghana. The vegetation in this area tends to be savannah woodland with some

drought-resistant trees and grass which are highly susceptible to bush fire from human activity. All this leads to scorched vegetation by high temperatures from the sun during the harmattan season, a time of prolonged periods without rain. This region has a rural population of 920,089, approximately less than one twentieth (4.9%) of the national population. There are 144,382 households occupying 88,401 houses, indicating an average household size of 6.4 persons and an average of 1.6 household sizes per house.

Economic activities are mainly in agriculture, hunting and forestry. Prominent agricultural produce are millet, guinea-corn, maize, groundnut, beans, sorghum and dry season tomatoes and onions. The most common economic trees are identified as sheanut which is a raw material for the food and cosmetic industries, dawadawa known for its high levels of Vitamin C, baobab and acacia for fuel wood and for construction purposes. Livestock and poultry production are also important. High technology industrial activity in the region is generally low, with only one industry in operation as at 2006 (Ministry of Local Government, n.d.). Most industrial activities are found in the small-scale industries sector as these can be achieved with simple technology, and the availability of local inputs. These small-scale economic activities are varied, ranging from craftwork in pottery, basketry and smock weaving, and leatherwork to straw works. One distinct feature of these cottage industries is that they are basically labour intensive and rely mostly on traditional talent and skill.

Literacy in English and the Ghanaian language within the region is very low (about 21.2), much higher than the national illiteracy average of 45.9%. The overall levels of educational attainment are much lower in the

region, compared with the country as whole. For instance, the proportion of the population aged three years and over that has no schooling or attended only pre-school is 75.7 per cent in the region compared to 47.7 per cent in the country as a whole.

Basic education facilities are available in almost all communities. There are 449 primary schools, 177 junior high schools (JHS) and 23 senior high schools (SHS). Private basic schools are found in a few area of the region. The proportion of the region's educated population that have primary or middle/JHS as the highest level of education they attained (68.9%) is rather large, and poses a great challenge for the full implementation of the current educational reform, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) and other education improvement programmes. School enrolment for Primary 1 in the 2006/2007 academic year, however, is generally comparable with the national situation for males and also for females. On the other hand, substantial differences between the national and regional picture persist at the JHS level.

The Pineapple School was established in 1996/1997 academic year and is one of the newly established schools to be set to address the educational needs of PWDs. At the time of the study the school enrolment was 196.

Case Study School 3 - The Mango School

The Mango School is situated within a part of Ghana which covers an area of approximately 2,391 square kilometres, about 10 per cent of Ghana's total land area. The region has about 75 per cent of its vegetation within the high forest zone of Ghana, and lies in the equatorial climatic zone that is characterized by moderate temperatures. It is also the wettest part of Ghana

with an average rainfall of 1,600mm per annum. The population of the region has increased over the years, from 626,155 in 1960 to 1, 924, 577 in 2000, representing about 10 per cent of the total population of the country. The distribution of the population in the region is uneven, distributed in 410, 142 households in 259,874 houses, which give an average of 1.6 households per house for the region (Ministry of Local Government, n.d.).

Architecturally, the regional capital has huge multiple family buildings, known locally as “compound houses”, basically because rooms are built around a communal compound in the centre. Such rooms in these houses may be single, two or three bed roomed “flats” and are inhabited by individual families who share toilet, bath and sometimes kitchen facilities. Any one such building can be inhabited by 100 persons living in about forty rooms. This leads to a very high household per house ratio in those particular districts.

Over the past two decades, this region has experienced some improvements in educational attainment and enrolment rates at the basic education level. For instance, the proportion of the population that had attained basic education increased from 28% in 1984 to 34% in 2000. Beyond junior secondary school however, these figures are not very encouraging (Ministry of Local Government, n.d.). The level of literacy in this region is estimated at 58%, compared to the national average of 57.9%.

The Mango School was established in 1971 by a philanthropist who desired to help with the education of a few deaf children she found in the town. The school has a wide catchment area, serving families from 13 districts. Between the 2002/2003 and the 2006/2007 academic years, pupil enrolment had increased from 236 to 269. This was as a result of awareness

creation within the region on the benefits of educating the disabled child. Again, the increased advocacy in the country for the passage of the disability bill heightened the plight of disabled children within Ghana.

Case Study School 4-The Pawpaw School

The Pawpaw School is located in a region with a land area of 19,323 square kilometres, occupying 8.1 % of the total land area of Ghana, representing the sixth largest region in the country. The region has a population of 2,106,696 representing 11.1% of Ghana's total population and the third most populous. There are 456,663 households residing in 283,461 houses with an average household size of 4.6.

The traditional extended family operates strongly in this region exhibited in the description of the population structure within the households as 21.7 % being heads, 36.9% children, 9.6 % grandchildren, with other relatives making up 18.4%. Thus, 74.0% of household members are related to the head while 4.3% are non-relatives or have affinal ties to the head (Ministry of Local Government, n.d.).

The region is rich in minerals such as gold, diamond, bauxite-tantalite, limestone, kaolin and clay with gold being mined commercially. The forest and type of soils are suitable for the cultivation of a wide variety of food and cash crops including cocoa, cola-nuts, pineapple citrus oil-palm, maize, peppers among others. The main economic activities of the occupants of the region are in agriculture, sales, production, and transportation among others. More females are engaged in the agriculture industry than in the other sectors. About 75.5% of the population is described as being economically active in the various sectors. The level of literacy in both English language and a

Ghanaian language for the region is estimated to be 63.6%. Of the population aged six years and older in the region about 30% have never attended school.

The Pawpaw School was established in 1975 as a special unit attached to the local authority mainstream school. It has a pupil population of 107 and staff population of 48 (2006/2007 academic year). The unique feature of this school is the fact that it is a unit that is attached to a mainstream school. After persistent inability of the mainstream school to cope with the demands of the unit, its management decided from the 2006/2007 academic year, that the school was to be de-coupled from the mainstream school because CHI do not benefit from the hours spent in the mainstream classrooms. Teachers from the special school had to go along with the CHI to the mainstream classrooms to offer support and facilitate the delivery of lessons. This was felt to be a bother and placed too much demand on specialist teachers. A decision was therefore made to separate it from the mainstream school. This issue vividly illustrates the difficulties of mainstreaming children with hearing disabilities in our Ghanaian schools.

Case Study School 5-The Melon School

The Melon School is located in another district within the same region as the Pawpaw School. I was interested in visiting this school because for a considerable length of time within the history of special education in Ghana, it had formed the crucible for the training of teachers for children with disabilities in the country. This unique SMSSCHI used to be the demonstration school for the only training institution for specialist teachers in special education in Ghana.

With 17 districts within the region, the school has a fairly large catchment area. Problems of overcrowding are not that pronounced as the existence of two other such schools in the region ensures more vacant places for CHI. Apart from the facilities for the CHI, there is a centre for these deaf-blind children, where they are helped to acquire basic living skills.

Case Study School 6-The Coconut School

The smallest administrative region, in terms of a land of 3,245 square kilometres, roughly 1.4% of the total land area of Ghana, is the location for study school six. The region has a coastline of approximately 225 kilometres. Falling within the dry coastal equatorial climatic zone, the region experiences very little rainfall but floods are very common during the brief rain seasons due to the flat terrain and poor drainage network.

Describing the population, this region is the second most populated, with a population of 2,905,726 in 2000, accounting for 15.4 per cent of Ghana's total population. The region has remained the most densely populated region since 1960 with an estimated 895.5 persons per square metre (2000). This has resulted in high room occupancy. It is estimated that, 42.2% of households occupy one room, 29.5% occupy two rooms while 28.3% occupy three or four rooms. The regional capital has an average household 4.6 and the average room density of 2.0 per room.

A unique feature of this region is its proportion of persons living on the streets. It is estimated that the number of people counted outside houses during the most recent census was 16,406 or 27.0 of the national figure. While it was acknowledged that this figure included people who were in transit to other parts of the country, it was also recognised that a sizeable number was

homeless. This has initiated a lot of initiatives to provide some accommodation for such identified people especially children.

The occupational structure of the region shows that 42.0% of the people who are economically active were engaged in sales and service occupations, with professional, technical and related workers accounting for 10.8%. The industrial sector is dominated by wholesale and retail trade and manufacturing.

The literacy rate is 85.1% in the capital and 50.0% in the least developed district in the region. The proportion of persons aged 6 years and older who have never been to school ranges from 20 % to 43.0 % in the region. The proportion of students at the SHS, vocational/technical and tertiary levels in the region is estimated to be higher for males than females. Considering persons with non-tertiary post-secondary education in teacher education, nursing and agricultural extension however, females are more represented (Ministry of Local Government, n.d.).

The Coconut School was established by missionaries, notably Reverend Dr. Tetteh-Ocloo in 1965, a deaf person himself. In 1969, it was taken over by the government and is thus the first of the SMSSCHI in Ghana. The school has grown from its small beginnings and currently has a pupil population of 240 and a staff of 27. It was the only non-residential SMSSCHI in the country but at the time of data collection was in the process of transforming into a boarding one from September of the 2007/2008 academic year. This intended change was in response to the increasing difficulty in transporting children to the school for regular activities to go on. There was a vigorous construction going on as the school struggled to complete buildings before the start of the academic year.

Case Study School 7- The Pear School

The region in which The Pear School is located occupies a land area of 9,826 square kilometres, or 4.1% of Ghana's land area, making it the third smallest region in the country. This region was the first point of the country's contact with the Europeans and its capital used to be the capital for the then known nation. It also was the hub for self-rule and many of its sons and daughters were instrumental in the independence struggle that liberated the nation from colonial rule.

The region has a population of 1, 593, 823, the second most densely populated in the country. With the exception of its capital, the average number of households per house is less than 2 which then jumps to 7.1 in the capital. There are a total of 233,239 housing units in the region, with the capital having a very low stock of housing units leading to high numbers of households per housing unit. A majority of these housing units are either owned by a household member or a relative who does not reside in the building.

The occupation of the populace is predominantly agriculture which employs about two-thirds of the work-force. There is the production of cocoa (the main national cash crop), some oil palm plantations, pineapple and grain production concentrated in a few districts. Since all of these agricultural activities are mainly on a small-scale basis, there is a high incidence of children engaged in these economic activities.

Literacy among the population 15 years and older is 57.1, about the same proportion as the national average of 57.9. Most of those literate have proficiency in English and a Ghanaian language with another 16.6% being

literate in English language only. The capital has the highest literacy rate of about 75.1%. Approximately a third of the population in all districts except the capital have never been to school, with females accounting for 43.4% of this group. Slightly more than half of the population within the region have attained primary education, less than 6% have attained secondary education and barely 3% have attained tertiary education except in the capital where the figure rises to 9 % (Ministry of Local Government, n.d.).

The Pear School, like other study schools aims to give formal education to hearing-impaired children in Ghana, equipping its students with skills in basic literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills. Furthermore, it teaches its students important vocational skills such as carpentry, farming, and dressmaking, enabling its graduates to lead active and productive lives in the socio-economic activities of this developing nation. The majority of students were deaf but there was a small minority who were blind. The school in the 2006/2007 academic had a pupil enrolment of 375 pupils and served the educational needs of children in 12 districts within the region. At the time of data collection, the school had a staff of around 40. Some senior staff lived at the school, while others lived in the city, roughly about 5 kilometres from the school.

Demographic Distribution of Participants

The participants who were invited to participate in the study during the Phase 1 data collection process are presented next in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of Participants by number of years at post and formal training in school management

Participant	Years at post	Formal training in education management
SH		
1	4	GES in-service training
2	4	MA
3	3	GES in-service training
4	4	MA
5	4	GES in-service training
6	6	GES in-service training
7	2	GES in-service training
ASH		
1	4	GES in-service training
2	6	GES in-service training
3	5	GES in-service training
4	14	Certificate in management of education
5	5	GES in-service training
6	8	GES in-service training
7	10	GES in-service training
HOD		
1	3	GES in-service training
2	2	GES in-service training

Table 5

Continued

3	4	GES in-service training
4	3	GES in-service training
5	4	GES in-service training
6	4	GES in-service training
7	3	GES in-service training

SMCC

1	2	GES in-service training
2	1	GES in-service training

SENCO

1	2	GES in-service training
2	2	GES in-service training
3	1	GES in-service training
4	1	GES in-service training
5	1	MA
6	2	GES in-service training
7	2	GES in-service training

From the distribution of participants, SMC members have been in their position in a range of one year to 15 years. The interesting trend in the distribution was the fact that most ASHs had been at post longer than the SHs. The reason ascribed for this occurrence was a move from the GES to introduce some academic competency into school management. ASHs had more experience in the local management of study school but could not be promoted

to the headship of their schools as they did not possess degrees in education. This trend had interesting ripple effects on organisational processes which were explored further in the findings on POSDCoRB discussion.

The distribution again points to a very low proportion of SMC membership with formal training in educational management. While the GES had made efforts to offer some training in school management, was this training adequate for SMC members to execute their duties and responsibilities with competence?

Yet another intriguing indicator in the data display was the length of time SENCO officers had spent at their posts. On inquiry, I was informed that most of them were newly qualified or newly posted to their stations. There was an indication that the post experienced frequent changes as teachers moved out of work stations for one reason or the other. At the time of data collection for instance, two of the officers were pursuing further courses in a university. Once they completed their programmes there was very little likelihood of them returning to their current posts. This arguably has implications for the maintenance of the relationships between schools and the local education directorates.

The distribution for School Management Committee Chair (SMCC) also pointed to persistent changes in the parents who were assigned roles as SMCC. Potential challenges in schools maintaining long term relationships with parent groups through the SMCC became challenged due to the continual change in the chair. A related challenge was the effect this continual change had on the lack of time for such personnel to gain competence in their assigned posts.

The Nature of Management (POSDCoRB) in SMSSCHI

The data presented in this section responds to Research Question 1 which aims at an exploration of the nature of management activities in SMSSCHI. I was expecting that the day-to-day activities of school management enacted in SMSSCHI would be patterned along the lines of POSDCoRB i.e. planning, organising, staffing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting. For each letter of the acronym, questions concerning “who?”, “what?”, “where?”, “when?”, “how” of school management to facilitate a description of the management that was enacted in schools was explored.

Planning

From the data, school planning in Ghana was seen as a necessary corollary to effective school management. In the 2004/2005 and 2005/2006 academic years, there was a drive in the public sector to encourage all public institutions including those concerned with education to adopt some business practices to improve on prevailing efficiency and effectiveness levels.

In this direction, schools were encouraged to design strategic plans that would articulate the peculiar needs of schools such that activities and programmes would be carried out to address identified problems (MOE, 2004). Such strategic plans were to give an overview of the current state of the schools’ management and administrative arrangements in place, all other information on pupils and staff, as well as available and expected resources that could facilitate the realization of set educational goals. Schools were encouraged to set targets and design catchy slogans that would inspire the pursuit of excellence in stakeholders.

Responding to the question of how planning was moderated by vision and mission statements, the data suggested that schools used a cautious and conservative approach to this management practice. All study schools had missions and visions in response to the demands of the GES. The extent to which these visions and mission statements were reflected in the daily activities of the schools was another issue altogether.

Participants displayed a low understanding or adherence to the intended goals of the projections described in the statements. The expressions participants used to describe their inability to articulate plans in relation to their vision and mission statements suggested a lack of awareness of the linkages between the statements and school planning to realize desired ends.

Reacting to how the planning as a management function was enacted in schools, indication from the data was that school planning was centrally controlled from the headquarters of the GES. The GES consistently provided guidelines on the management of basic schools, making these guidelines the primary planning instrument for pre-tertiary schools in the country. District Directorates of Education (DDE) which were in direct control of local schools were served with a central plan from the headquarters. The district planning team then slotted in local projects for the term including district activities like sports and cultural festival activities and passed this aggregated plan to the schools within their district. These guidelines formed the basis for school planning, allowing schools to slot in their locally planned programmes. Schools had to adhere to the demands of the centralised plans if they were to fit into the programme of the District Education Directorates (DED).

Participants explained the centrally-controlled nature of planning. Various reasons were advanced including inexperience of school management teams in the theories underlying management. All participants indicated that school management teams had very little training in management. Preparation and continuing professional training sessions expected from the GES to keep management teams abreast of trends in school management were few and far in between. While all seven schools had designed their local mission and vision statements, the non-documentation of long-term plans echoes the prevailing situation in the management of schools in the country.

The Planning Process. Drawing from the aggregated data, it was indicated that the process of school planning was carried out collaboratively during staff meetings and committees. Problems within the school were identified and strategies to address these problems were devised collectively by members of staff. This was to ensure that pupils were given a stimulating atmosphere to learn in. Staff to a large extent were involved in various avenues to engage in decision making in the schools. For instance, at the school level, upon reception of the centralised plans from the directorates, all seven SHs met with their management teams for deliberation on how to adapt and implement the plan. A staff meeting was then arranged where all staff members are appraised of the plan. School-based plans were then slotted into the guidelines from the GES. As some indicated:

Normally at the beginning of the year, we decide what we have to do... we have our staff meeting...We set our objectives and we take our mission statement and our vision, then our

objectives, how we hope to achieve these together as a staff (SH-Mango School).

We meet every term to look at the plan from the GES and then we plan our own school programmes (SH-Pineapple school).

At these somewhat inaugural meetings for the term, teachers were assigned to classes and other schedules as class teachers, form tutors, schedule officers for time-tabling, cultural activities etc. Time schedules and other demands from staff were discussed and strategies and resources were identified for carrying out school programmes. At two of such meetings that I observed there was a very interactive session where staff engaged with the SH in drawing up plans for school activities.

Types of Plans in Use. Of the seven study schools that I visited, two had a documented strategic plan which articulated identified needs, resources needed to carry out programmes to address the needs as well as who and what should be involved in carrying out activities. One SH in particular talked about the use of an incremental style of management. The SH indicated that:

Each morning, just after morning assembly, we meet as a staff to assess our activities for the previous day... to assess whether we are on track for the week's target. This way we are able to meet our targets for the year. Although we do not have a specific document showing our targets, because of this approach we are able to meet our targets which

are written in minutes from staff meetings (SH-Melon school).

From the data, it was realised that schools carried out activities that had been planned. For example, based on the plans that schools designed, additional monetary and non-monetary resources and support were sought from benefactors both locally and internationally. Some income generation projects on some campuses were the direct result of funding that schools sought to improve on school facilities.

Organising

To ensure order, there was the need for an organisational structure so people could understand their space and how their activities fitted into the general structure of the organisation. The organisation was divided into work units or departments, where each unit was assigned a task to complete. Each piece of work or task was then assigned to trained individuals to execute. Organising also involves establishing an authority and communication structure between and among the various levels of work units within an organisation (Mullins, 2007).

Authority Structure. Study schools had work divisions or departments structured alongside the general structure designed by the GES for school organisation in Ghana. Management activities were grouped into two: academic and domestic. The school head was the chief executive officer of the school, implementing decisions taken by the SMC and the staff. The assistant school head was in charge of the academic activities of the school, over-seeing all curricular activities with the help of the various departmental heads. Domestic affairs were overseen largely by the senior housemaster or mistress

with their team. To help children have an acceptable quality of life after school, each dormitory was assigned a housemother who oversaw and supervised the domestic activities of the children when the academic staff went off duty after the regular school day. Older pupils were assigned younger pupils to “mentor” under the supervision of the housemother and as one SH commented: “the children end up behaving like a family” (SH - Mango school).

Concerning academic affairs, work units in study schools were divided into departments along subject lines as well as school levels. There were pre-school units, basic level units, and junior high school levels and in two cases post junior high school levels with each level having a head of department. In contrast to the general management of public basic schools in Ghana, study schools had school accountants and other support staff like matrons and cooks. This was because as has been stated in describing these schools, the boarding nature of the schools demanded these extra work schedules. Management in these schools therefore had more discretion and a wider scope of decision-making to do than the average basic school head in the country.

Orientation for Assigned Duties. Individuals assigned to tasks were given job descriptions to ease them into the demands of their work schedule. Of the schools visited, orientation was more of an informal process, where individuals who had been at post for long initiated the newly appointed into their job schedules. In three out of the seven schools, there were formally documented job descriptions designed for middle management roles including that of heads of department and house mistresses/masters which detailed the

activities that staff was expected to perform as well as the responsibilities of the position.

Staff Participation in Decision-making. The data revealed that in addition to the formal departmental activities that managed the academic programme of the schools, there were committees that handled extra-curricular activities like welfare issues, cultural activities and sports etc. All members of staff were assigned some work on these committees according to interest and expertise.

Decisions made by these committees were communicated first to the SH and then to staff members during meetings. Committees and staff meetings were the fora that brought all staff together to participate in school management decision making. There were regular and emergency staff meetings to enable a continuous decision making cycle and thus facilitate effective management.

The existence of committees and departments facilitated the implementation of decisions taken as a collective to address the identified needs of the schools. This situation was illustrated in one assistant headmaster being able to give me all the required information on the school in the absence of the head of the school. Teachers who were in charge of departments readily gave information and demonstrations on what usually transpired in their departments. As one SH observed on team work within the schools:

We do things together... we normally discuss these issues at staff meetings and agree on what to do.

The head then takes it up to the place by writing a proposal or letter asking for assistance. In case we

get responses to our letters ... it depends on the area where we need the help... like we wrote the U.S. embassy on water as a problem. Someone is in charge of the project, we look for someone to come and do the work and provide receipts for collection by the officers (SH-Orange school).

One interesting issue that cropped up in the data was the fact that in all the seven cases, the ASH had been at post for longer than the SH and their discussion of the historical and philosophical foundations for school activities were more coherent than that of the SHs. This occurrence was evidently as a result of the GES appointing people with first degrees into school headship as a means of improving the professional competence of school heads and possibly enhancing school management and all the other benefits it would have for improved school and student outcomes. Though from my observation, a general feel of team spirit was very evident in the schools, this occurrence had implications for team building as was portrayed in two instances where the school head and the assistant gave me a different description of parental response to school meetings. In one case, for example, while the head thought attendance was good because PTA meeting days were transferred from market days to non-market days, the deputy school head had a contrary view on the same issue.

From the interviews and observation data, there was a hint of underlying resentment among the ASHs. Though they talked about experiencing cordial relationships with their immediate boss in two instances there were some

remarks about the lack of a degree making them redundant. As one ASH indicated:

Ah well... I have been at this school for a very long time. I know the school inside and out...but they (GES) say I do not have a degree so I do not qualify to be a head...anyway I have a few years to retirement so I will do it (ASH- Orange school).

Student Participation in Decision-Making. In all the schools visited there was a prefectorial system in place. These pupils in effect formed the student council for the schools though the expressed views of participants did not point to a formal body known as a student council. Students were excluded from all committees in the schools, eliminating them from the bulk of decision-making in the school. In the words of one SH:

Our students are not represented on any committee...however we do involve them in decision-making especially when disciplinary issues among students become a problem (SH- Coconut School).

In all study schools, pupils were actively involved in pastoral duties, with older pupils assigned younger pupils to mentor, supervise out-of-class activities like the cleaning of the school compound and in games. However, participants did not formally recognize this as part of the general management of the schools. Study schools therefore were missing out on useful avenues for inculcating critical thinking skills needed for decision making for everyday life both in and out of school for the CHI.

Staffing

One of the major functions in school management relates to staffing issues. An analysis of the efforts of people leading to how the staffing function was carried out in schools is done next.

Recruitment of Staff. Management in all study schools indicated that members of the specialist teaching staff for SMSSCHI were trained in one university in the country. Schools acquired their staff through the GES which supplied schools with trained staff from a stock of newly trained and re-assigned teachers. At the end of each academic year, the SH in consultation with heads of departments identified staffing needs for the ensuing academic year and requests for staff were then made to the DDE of the GES for attention. Teaching and non-teaching staff were posted or assigned to the school from the GES and were allocated schedules by the SH with the ASH and heads of department in attendance.

While schools were able to fill available vacancies with trained teaching personnel, the numbers of trained specialist teachers in education of the hearing impairment (EHI) at post were considered inadequate. The teacher-pupil ratio was above the recommended 15/1 (MOESS, 2008), making the work of teachers difficult and reducing the effectiveness of the teaching/learning interaction in the school. According to one participant this:

...gave them stress and a feeling of helplessness as
they simply could not cope with the large numbers
(HOD - Orange School).

Some reasons that participants gave to account for this occurrence were the poor economic conditions in some towns in which most schools were

located. Qualified teachers were reluctant to accept posting to rural schools because they could not put their children in good schools and enjoy the basic amenities taken for granted in big towns. The Orange school for example lacked potable water. Again, teachers, when faced with the paucity of basic resources to facilitate their teaching, turn their backs on their training and move to mainstream schools where it is easier to teach concepts and achieve tangible results in student outcomes (SH - Orange school; SH - Pawpaw school; Avoke, 2002).

Another reason advanced by participants in three schools for the large student numbers was that vacancies in their schools were over-subscribed as the schools were close to Accra the capital city, forcing the schools to take the over-spill of children who could not find places in the Accra school. At the time of the study visits, this trend had resulted in a situation where there are high teacher/pupil ratios, with teachers handling about thirty pupils in one class instead of the recommended 15. In spite of these problems, teachers at post were putting in all efforts to bring education to the pupils. As one HOD said: “We do our best, for these children need our help” (HOD - Coconut school).

Participants were of the view that specially trained teacher numbers were inadequate to meet the needs of SMSSCHI. This, SHs indicated inadequate numbers was accounted for by a high attrition among teachers. This incidence requires that management puts in innovative strategies to retain staff.

Motivation and Retention of Staff. Motivation in study schools was an activity undertaken both internally and externally to enhance staff effort in realizing school goals. To ensure the retention of qualified staff and inspire

work excellence, management in all seven schools had devised various motivational packages for teachers. Teachers were encouraged to bring their best into their daily activities in the schools with incentives like food packages, free meals, affordable accommodation and affordable utility bills.

The schools, in addition, tried to look for accommodation in the nearest town or pair teachers up in the few bungalows on the school compound where these facilities were available. Those who lived far from the school campuses were transported in and out of school campuses by school buses. Since all the schools were on the outskirts of towns, staff in most cases were given lunch to help tide them over until they went home. At the Pineapple School, for instance, unmarried staff members were served lunch every day. This, in the view of some participants was to: “help teachers concentrate on their academic activities” (SH and ASH - Pineapple School).

Parents on occasion made some contribution or token to the schools for the motivation of staff. In the Coconut school, for example, one parent had instituted a best teacher award for staff to compete for on an annual basis. In the Pineapple school, some parents had solicited for funds from some benevolent societies and through that had contributed water storage facilities in the school to help ease a persistent water situation.

Staff appraisal was another motivational tool used by three SHs. This was particularly important as each session served as an accountability process for staff, helping staff to review their activities with the CEO (i.e. SH). Again, the results of the exercise were helpful as a point of reference whenever a staff member opted for promotion within the GES. This helped staff to be more

reflexive in their practice as they were aware that accountability would be required of them at some point in time.

Externally, the GES had instituted a national best teacher award for teachers in special education. This award was as a result of advocacy from the Special Education Division that special attention was needed in motivating teachers who chose to work in the demanding arena of special schools. According to participants, teachers in SEN schools possessed a general perception that educational authorities responsible for identifying the national best teacher award showed no interest in the special education sector. Where teachers were seen as putting in exemplary service, school management nominated such teachers to compete for the national best teacher award in special education. Some of the national awards could range from a new car to a bungalow, awards that provide some incentives which would normally be out of the economic reach of most teachers.

As a result of the use of this motivational technique, teachers were now encouraged to find even more innovative ways to deliver their lessons, hoping to be recognized some day for their efforts in special schools across the country. It was evident during data collection that most teachers had been at post for a very long time in the same school and while they complained about the difficulties associated with their tasks, they were willing to stay on and work, irrespective of whether their efforts were nationally acclaimed or not.

Compliance with Rules and Ethics. A strong work ethic was evident in all schools studied. Professional behaviour was guided by the Code of Ethics developed by the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) the teachers' union for teachers who operated in the pre-tertiary educational

sector. Where there was unacceptable conduct or behaviour deviations, various strategies were employed to bring the affected staff in line. One SH observed that:

When some staff member misbehaves, I call him or her for a one-on-one discussion. If the issue is not resolved then in accordance with Ghanaian custom, I ask one elderly teacher to talk things over. If this fails I either release the teacher to the District Director of Education or refer the matter to the disciplinary committee of the District Education Directorate (SH - Melon School).

Participants saw themselves as professionals and worked as such and the data indicated that most staff members displayed a high sense of purpose and school management had very little reason to adopt sanctioning tactics to get work done.

Continuing Professional Development. One demand by staff to school management was the provision of continuing professional development. This training, participants indicated, was facilitated through on-site training and was considered important for effective practice within the schools. The current policy of the GES was for the use of sign language as the medium of instruction in SMSSCHI. Participants considered their skills to support the curriculum of the special education programme as it existed at the 2007-2008 academic years as not robust enough. In this direction participants talked about their need for on-going education in the schools. The recurring answer to the probe on how often in-service training sessions occurred was: “we have in-

service training sessions on regular basis in the schools... at least once every month” (participants).

The main agenda for these training sessions was the correct use of sign language in interaction with pupils. All staff members (teaching and non-teaching) were invited to attend these sessions. At the Orange school, for example, newly-trained teachers are helped to adjust to teaching using sign language. Additionally, the school had assigned some deaf adults who are alumni of the school to help teachers with translation during classroom sessions.

Lesson notes planning was an essential part of the teaching/learning process. This was because some teachers asserted that some of the concepts were too difficult for pupils to easily grasp. Teachers had to make adaptations to the set lesson texts to address this and to enhance teacher performance and pupil learning: newly trained teachers were given sessions on lesson notes planning and lesson delivery. These sessions are especially important for subject teachers who do not possess any training in special education.

Of-site training sessions were provided mainly by the GES which occasionally organised training sessions in subject teaching. Other development partners also occasionally gave training to teachers. Assigned teachers who attended these sessions brought back information gained and shared with other colleagues in their schools. On occasion training sessions were organised by NGOs outside the school for staff. At the Pineapple school, the selection of staff to attend such training was seen as the recognition of a teacher’s efforts in the school.

Directing

In order to ensure for smooth school operations, work was divided into units and assigned to individuals to handle. The establishment of committee systems in all study schools facilitated the active running of schools. Directing is also explained as:

... all the activities that management undertakes to encourage staff to work to the best of the abilities. The act of ...guiding, inspiring, overseeing and instructing people towards accomplishment of organisational goals... (N. A., 2007).

Members of staff were assigned duties as heads of department, scheduled staff for various activities in the school (cultural activities, sports etc.). School activities were divided broadly into academic and domestic units with responsibility for leading these units going to the assistant school head and the senior house master/mistress. Each unit was assigned specific duties. As one SH commented:

...academic affairs deal with all that activities that go on in the classroom that are covered on the school's timetable ...domestic affairs makes up the rest of activities like dining and recreation that pupils are engaged in after going to the classroom to learn...(SH - Mango School).

The academic unit was sub-divided into units and designated as sections and departments like the Nursery Section, Basic School Section, Junior High School (JHS) Section and in two cases the Post-JHS Section. Under each

section, departments were further organized around subject groupings including, English, Mathematics, Geography etc. All these units were under the direction of a unit head. The unit heads liaised with the SH and ASH to receive resources and manage its utilisation to achieve the set targets for the unit. This system ensured the devolution of management in the realization of a distributed leadership in the schools. One SH described how heads of units helped in the management of the school. The SH said whenever there any project funding came into the school's coffers, the SH involved other staff:

When we get any funding... I share with staff
members who are capable If I know this staff
member is able, I bring them in to help (SH -
Orange School).

Dividing the management of the school into sub-units encouraged participation of staff in management decision making and promoted confidence and ownership of decisions. Carrying out activities to put these decisions into operation then became easier for all sections of the school community.

Coordinating

Management in study schools used various techniques to ensure coordination in the organisations. As discussed earlier in the chapter, the school just like any organisation, was organized around units or sections or departments, each unit taking responsibility for some specific aspect of the work required for the realization of organisational goals. As each unit carried out its activities, there was the need for some continuous links between them to ensure cooperation and minimize duplication of activities.

Devolving authority was one major way of decentralising decision-making and mainly resulted in involving the bulk of the staff in decision-making. In the study schools, heads of the various units continuously collaborated with each other and the school head to ensure a continuous flow of work activities.

Responsibility for Monitoring. In each of the study schools, the SH was the chief executive of the school, drawing authority from the GES through the School Management Committee (SMC). The head was assisted by a team of departmental and sectional heads and student leaders to see to the everyday running of the school. For smooth operation of management within the schools, activities were mainly grouped into two broad areas, domestic and academic.

The main activity of each school was academic affairs which was under the domain of the ASH whose duty it was to see to the uninterrupted implementation of school activities. Timetabling was a critical activity in this area as the needs of the staff and teaching regulations had to be taken into consideration to ensure smooth operations in the schools. This issue was especially crucial as in all the schools, the majority of teachers lived far away from the school campuses and in a country where public transportation was of a low status, there was a need to balance the exigencies of the situation. Form-masters provided the link between students and the ASH, ensuring that individual student needs in connection with academic issues and sometimes domestic affairs were met.

In addition, senior housemasters/mistresses coordinated domestic affairs with assistance from the house mothers and other housemasters/mistresses.

House mothers were elderly women who lived in the dormitories with an assigned group of children and were described as having an intimate knowledge of the individual students under their care. These “mothers” ensured that personal care for each child was done and generally supervised the children in the dormitories. Where issues came up that demanded official attention, housemothers then contacted housemasters/mistresses.

On the other hand, the prefectorial system provided a limp voice for the pupils in the management of the school. Though not invited to participate in decision making, prefects were encouraged to help with the day-to-day management activities within the school. For instance, prefects supervised their colleagues to do the general cleaning of the schools’ compound and in four cases, fetched water from the schools’ bore holes for cooking and cleaning in the schools’ kitchen. The sweeping and general tidying of the school’s compound was facilitated under the leadership of the prefects with supervision from housemothers and teachers on duty.

Reporting

Reporting as a management function is a complex activity, involving various multi-stages in its execution. Processes including documentation, project management, financial control, communication through various media including the use of the internet facilitated the reporting function in organisations. The state of the reporting function in study schools is the basis for the discussion in this section of the report.

Who does the School Report to? As an organisation existing in an environment and funded from public and private funds, the school reported internally and externally to relevant stakeholders on its activities. These

stakeholders included the staff and pupils (internal) and GES, NGOs, parents and the community (external).

Internally, the management reported to the staff through circulars and memos posted on notice boards and verbally at staff meetings. Teachers on duty were assigned to write weekly reports on daily school activities which provided a useful point of reference for management decision making. Such reports documented all school proceedings on a daily basis, keeping all staff members informed on what was happening in the school. Again, this record was a very useful tool when management had to complete school reports.

Pupils were given relevant information during morning assemblies as and when such information for them came up. On occasion, messages were passed on to house mothers for dissemination to the children outside normal school hours especially when these messages had to do with activities in the houses. Some information may also be passed on to parents for some action to address some welfare issues of their wards.

Another avenue for internal communication that schools utilised was the use of school notice boards. These boards provided information on issues concerning the school. For instance, time tables were displayed on general notice boards as well as some notices from the GES and in three cases, some newspaper clippings with news about disability were up for display on the school's general notice board.

Externally, schools accounted for their activities through reports and letters to its stakeholders (the GES, NGOs, parents and the community). Getting the school's stakeholders informed on what takes place within the school was a quarterly occurrence in most schools. This reporting was done

through reports to external partners and through circulars and memos internally. The level of external reporting received very little circulation, making SMSSCHI very non-distinct within the educational system in Ghana.

Another unique feature was the fact that study schools, though sited in some localities, were established to cater for the whole region, placing them in an isolated position from the communities they served. Catchment areas were too broad for schools to have any productive and sustained engagement with their communities. Participants indicated that management had devised strategies in reaching out to their communities including: touring the region occasionally with the children, visiting churches and other schools as a means of gaining some visibility in the communities.

To the GES, written and verbal reports were the main instruments utilised for reporting. As one SH put it:

We are supposed to write quarterly but at times you will realise that you will be repeating the same thing so I do it six months, six months that is, half yearly (SH - Coconut School).

There were face-to-face sessions at the headquarters where heads were invited to report on pertinent issues in their respective schools. The circuit officers and peripatetic teachers attached to school districts within the region, also visited the school and presented reports on their visits to the relevant district directors of education.

For parents, the schools reported on their activities at PTA meetings. At PTA meetings, parents were given the chance to air their views on school decision making as well as lay bare any problems they encountered in

assessing schools in the education of their children. Possible solutions were discussed and the best and most feasible were selected for implementation. Collaboration between the school and parents are some of the issues discussed. As one ASH indicated:

For parents, we call a PTA meeting and then we have a school management committee (SMC). ...the SMC meets at least once a term and when the need arises, we meet at emergency meetings to discuss what is going on in the school and what needs to be done in the school (ASH - Melon School).

Occasionally, some information may be passed on by housemothers to parents when they visited their children over the weekend. Some other information may be passed on through circulars posted to parents to keep them abreast of what was happening in the school.

To the local communities, three schools used an innovative way of exposing the activities of the school to the general public during cultural performances given by the children. During these sessions, teachers gave talks on deafness and its causes and educate the public on the importance of educating their children no matter the level of disability. These cultural troupes had gained such a wide reputation that one was invited to perform during the 2007 Independence Day celebration activities in Accra the capital, giving the children exposure on national TV.

Other strategies school management used to engage with stakeholders in their environment also included the SHs sometimes interacting with personnel

from the District Assembly. Occasionally, SHs appeared on the local FM stations to give some information on the school to the community.

One other reporting strategy that schools used was unusual. Children from the schools periodically visited churches in the locality as another way of interaction. It was interesting to note that there was no report of such visits to mosques in five of the study schools. One school was noted to have invited a local FM station to cover activities in the school during the 2006/7 academic year Speech and Prize-giving day as a means of projecting a positive image to the society on the capabilities of the deaf child. As the SH indicated:

We wanted to showcase the abilities of our children
so we invited one local FM to cover the school's
Speech and Prize-giving day (SH - Pear School).

One other strategy in use in schools for reporting was the use of the local media. Management had on occasion invited the print and broadcast media to visit the school and observe innovations that had occurred within the school. For instance, in 2006, the press were invited to cover the inauguration of the assessment centre for the school. To the development partners i.e. the NGOs that collaborated with the schools, reports were the main instruments used to give insights on relevant assistance given to the schools and the impact this assistance had on the quality of educational provision in the schools.

Conspicuously missing in the school's reporting system was an established structure within schools to interact with the wider community nationally and internationally through technology. Only three schools had email addresses and operating telephone lines. This state of affairs reflected

some gaps in organisational communication and subsequent interaction between the schools and their environment.

Communication, a very viable marketing strategy, was yet to be incorporated in schools' strategic plans. Accessible information on the World Wide Web, for instance, was made available on the websites of some voluntary organisations that had provided some aid to the school. This situation was illustrated in a discussion on a blog I picked on the net. I carried out a search on the web, looking for information on the SMSSCHI before setting out on data collection in 2007. Information was sparse and scattered. One interesting entry displayed in Fig. 3 which I found summed up my impression about reporting on the web for these schools:



Fig. 3. **Sample reporting on the web (Boles, 2006).**

The author was writing to appeal for funds to be sent to the school and complained of not finding information on the school. In her comments, she writes:

In a quick web search I found some agencies that claim to help the Accra Deaf School but, according to Brooke's recent email, that help does not appear to be hitting the ground in Accra. Do you think we can divine the address of the school from this image

to send supplies straight to the children? This is the outside of the school. It looks like a prison... (Boles, 2006).

Responsibility for Reporting. From the data, the ASH was responsible for gathering and compiling almost all reports in the schools. Such reports were then inspected and conveyed to the relevant agency by the SH. One NGO had gone a step further and trained a staff member each in two schools where they had had on-going building projects. These teachers were trained in project monitoring so they could monitor the contractors during the construction of the buildings on the school campuses. Their training also included budget preparation and monitoring and so these teachers generally managed the projects under the SHs supervision and also provided a liaison service for the schools and the NGO.

Occasions for Reporting. Reporting was an on-going activity as one or the other agency was demanding some information all the time. Generally, however, SHs indicated that they had to submit quarterly reports mainly to the GES. The annual school report however was seen as the major tool for reporting. This document summarized all activities that had taken place during the school year, the challenges that the schools had experienced and the extent to which they had been able to cope with these challenges. As one SH put it:

We do report on our activities with our stakeholders...usually on a quarterly basis with the GES...with other stakeholders like the NGOs we send them reports on the projects that we are carrying out together (SH - Pineapple School).

Budgeting

Budgeting as a management function is the process of articulating a written plan which details the projected income and expenditure decisions of an organisation for a definite period of time, usually one year. As a management tool, budgets are very useful for planning for the future as well as a standard against which set objectives can be analysed to provide feedback on an organisation's performance. The practice of budgeting as a management function in study schools is discussed below.

The Budget Process. The evidence suggested that budgeting was an activity undertaken by the head and the bursar. School management practised the incremental type of budget design where projections for the ensuing year were made based on the previous year's expenditures with some adjustments made for inflation. Funds were released from the GES in four tranches over four quarters to finance school activities during the school year. Following the dictates of the capitation grant each child was assigned GH¢3,000 (approximately \$3) on the average (MOESS, 2008). As the bulk of funds of the schools was appropriated from the GES (Government of Ghana or GOG) based on a specific predetermined funding formula, there were stringent budgetary planning procedures in the school. Participants agreed overwhelmingly that this was the one most critical challenging factor as they managed schools. This funding situation presented extra challenges as the special needs of children demanded special provisions which could only be made available through extensive funding. Management had to be innovative to look for extra funding to make up for the shortfall in the schools' budgets. As one SH described the process of school budgeting:

One aim of management is to source for funds from NGOs and other voluntary organisations and philanthropists to get materials that government has not been able to supply...one other aim is to provide vocationally-based training for the deaf children because we know there are no opportunities for higher education for them...we don't have workshops for them even though we have some equipment donated by some NGOs...we also said we will follow up the district assemblies to provide what they can so that NGOs can supplement (SH - Melon School).

The data indicated that the GES was very strict about budgets that schools produced. Records of pupil registration which had been duly signed by each individual pupil were submitted along with the budget document for the GES to ascertain the correct numbers of pupils in any one particular school.

Executing the budget was another major challenge participants pointed to. In most cases, the data indicated that funds were released late to the schools, calling for innovative managing especially in the feeding programmes of the schools. As one SH asserted:

We have so many constraints when it comes to budgeting and funding school activities...funds arrive late in some cases we receive the first tranche for the first quarter in the third quarter, posing serious

challenges especially when we have to look at feeding the children (SH-Pawpaw School).

Again, all school heads indicated that the funds they were allocated from the GES were inadequate for the running of the school especially when it came to the financing of infrastructure development. School management then had to adopt varied innovative strategies to appropriate funds from other sources to make up for the shortfall in the funding needed to put other school projects into operation.

External Support for School Budget. As indicated earlier in this chapter, school management was challenged in financing school activities and in redressing budget shortfalls, supporting funds were sourced from various sources. At the time of data collection all study schools received food allocations from the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to supplement what the schools were able to provide for their pupils. This provision was due to be phased out during the 2009/2010 academic years, as the service provider had reported a lack of funds to keep up the food supply. Basically, as one SH said:

This occurrence was as a result of a change in policy in developing countries. The policy was for the phasing out of segregated schooling for CWD...so the funding nations are not able to provide funds in this direction (SH - Melon School).

In two schools, there was a close collaboration between the school and the local district assembly, the political governing agency for the district in which the schools were located. The assembly had provided funding for the extension of electricity to the school campus in one instance while the other

school had benefited from a wall around the school premises to ensure the safety of the children from the hazards of a major international highway located just outside the school premises.

Five schools had also received various financing packages from the World Vision International, an NGO. In one instance, the NGO had provided funds for the establishment of an assessment centre and a palm plantation for the school. The produce from the farms supplemented the feeding programme of the schools whilst the centre, apart from promoting a better planning of individualised plans for pupils, also served as an income-generating venture should the general public have access to the facility. Another school had a snail rearing farm as well as a piggery and poultry farms financed through World Vision International funds.

The aim of these projects was to enable schools have access to a sustainable source of internally generated funds for school activities. For such international organisations, specially designed budget formats were supplied by the organisations to the school for compliance.

Participation in the Budget Process. The budget was a very useful in involving stakeholders in school management especially staff. Participants indicated that inputs from staff were incorporated into the school budget. Staff members representing the various units in the school were encouraged to participate in budgetary decision making by submitting their projected needs for the ensuing year, which were subsequently incorporated in the school's budget before the budgeting cycle started. Pupils were not part of the decision making in budgeting. One interesting question that comes up is whether the

budget was used as an accountability tool to assess school performance to serve as a spring board for future action.

Internal Generation of Funds. Ghana as a signatory to the Salamanca Accord of 1994 has acceded to the inclusive policy where educational provision for PWDs was to be carried out in mainstream schools. However, implementing the dictates of the policy has been very slow.

In response to the changing philosophy on the provision of special education in mainstream schools, funding to support special schools which are segregated from NGOs was drying up. Development partners who in previous years appropriated funds from developed nations to finance some activities in special schools in Ghana were now strapped for cash to continue this provision. In order to allay any disturbance to the running of special schools in the country, one NGO which was the main development partner for five of the study schools had helped the schools to establish some income generation schemes.

The data indicated that all study schools engaged in some income generation activity to raise extra funds which then went into the finance of extra-curricular activities. Income generation schemes in schools included a snail rearing farm, a piggery, poultry farming and a tie-dye business which generated some revolving funds for the provision of materials for teaching science, agriculture and art. At the same time, these ventures served as avenues where pupils received work place skills for future employment. Other constraints in the management of school funding or budgeting are fully discussed in the challenges section.

Summary for POSDCoRB

The data validate the existence of management activities as described with the POSDCoRB framework. There was homogeneity in all schools in the execution of management functions of planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating and budgeting basically as a result of schools having to operate within a centralised administrative system of the GES. From this result, the POSDCoRB framework has served as a very cogent tool to study management practices in special schools.

From the data, two schools were outstanding in the implementation of proactive management practices by designing and implementing a strategic plan to address local problems. The non-existence of strategic plans in schools was an area that suggested interesting areas for further studies. One question that persistently nagged my mind was: could this incidence be the result of the under training of school management in formal school management?

The Nature of the Relationships between SMSSCHI and Stakeholders

Drawing from the literature and my understanding of the concept of management, the day- to-day management of organisations was a product of the interaction that took place between management and agencies in the environment. During Phase 1 of data collection one aspect of interest to me was describing the interactions that existed between schools and stakeholders in their environment from the members of school management's perspectives to an understanding of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. The data that offer this information addresses Research Questions 3, 4 and 5: what is the state of the relationships or linkages that study schools shared with stakeholders in their environment?

Relationships between the SMSSCHI and Community

In 1996, the government of Ghana promulgated the Local Government Act which promoted the devolution of civil administration to District Assemblies in the spirit of decentralisation. Subsequently, schools were demanded to establish committees that would bring together members from the school and community to form a single management body to enrich the decisions that governed all school activities. Schools were mandated to institute committee meetings like the School Performance Appraisal Meeting (SPAM). At such meetings, the schools were required to report on the performance of school outcomes notably pupil performance in standardized examinations carried out at local and national levels. This was designed as an accountability tool to encourage the participation of the community in school management. However, in all study schools such committees were not functioning.

From the data, there was an indication that pupils did not participate in the district wide examinations. As such there was no empirical assessment of pupil outcomes on a continuing basis as pertains in mainstream schools. Subsequently, schools did not operate school performance appraisal meeting (SPAM) meetings, losing out on all the benefits of accountability that such meetings accorded for school management. In the words of one HOD:

Oh... we used to have the SPAM but we have stopped...it is too difficult... as the parents live far away it makes it difficult for them to attend meetings (SH - Pineapple School).

Community Support and Rapport. Responding to my inquiry on school's relationships with communities, it was revealed that study schools had good relationships with their immediate environment. The location of the schools on the outskirts of towns however, limited the physical contact between the school and the local people in most instances. Goodwill for the study schools was quite high in the middle and northern section of the country as the communities saw the schools' activities as opening up their local communities to the outside world, something beneficial to the members of each community.

All the schools did have SMCs which had an opinion leader from the community as the SMC chair. Though it was possible to meet only two members of the SMC chair, it was very intriguing that three of the seven chairs of the SMC were chiefs of the locality in which the schools were sited. In most cases, such chiefs might have played a very large role in the acquisition of land for the construction of permanent premises. School management was of the opinion that the involvement of these regents in the schools' management promoted community appreciation for the children in the schools. The SMC chairs were seen as a link between the school and the community, generating goodwill for the school.

In another instance, the land for the permanent site of one school was donated by a prominent family in the community. The newly elected assembly man who liaised between that community and the District Assembly paid a visit to the school to familiarise himself with the school's activities and challenges. This visit was very important and the relationship if sustained, could lead to a greater involvement of the District Assembly in the school,

strengthening arguments that could be advanced for future requests for infrastructure from the assembly. In a third instance, a local small-scale manufacturer had opened its doors to the deaf-blind children who went on placement to the factory once a week for exposure to work ethos. Gradually, these children were being trained to build up confidence and acquire some skills in independent living as well as marketable skills for future living.

Financial Involvement. In four study schools, there was periodic financial support from benevolent societies in the community. In three schools, financial support from the local community was very minimal as the communities were very poor and locals did not have much money to give away. One SH indicated that:

One parent collaborated with her Old Students' Association to buy poly tank water storage containers to help ease the water situation in the school (SH - Pear School).

Another SH asserted that:

No...we do not get much money from the community as the people are too poor...in fact we have to share the use of our borehole with them as there is no pipe-borne water in the community (SH - Pineapple School).

From the data, the impression that emerges is one where parental involvement in school management was influenced by socio-economic status. Schools in relatively affluent societies received more support from community

members and agencies than those communities where poverty and literacy levels were low.

Limitations to Community Involvement in School Management. The general observation from the data indicates that the catchment area for study schools was wide. SMCs were finding it difficult to involve communities in districts other than districts where schools were sited. This situation was explained by schools' position of serving the whole of a region, hence the difficulties in fostering close links with the community as no one community could claim 'ownership' of the school. One SH said:

Our children come from all over the region...sometimes outside the region ... sometimes from the neighbouring country as we are on the border with another country...so Ghanaian parents who have CHI do send their children to be educated here...so who does the school "belong" to? (SH- Pear School).

The Relationships between the SMSSCHI and Parents

At the time of data collection, one philosophy in the education sector was for the active involvement of parents in the management of the school. Various strategies that the GES had designed for schools to involve parents included school performance appraisal meeting (SPAM), school management committee (SMC) in addition to the parent-teacher association (PTA).

By its design, the SPAM was an appraisal meeting to ensure accountability from school management. Parents and the community were to be given an account of the schools' activity for an academic year after which

analyses were to be made. Parents and community members then sought to analyse with the school management the desirability of the report. New targets were then set to help address any gaps for the ensuing year to ensure that school programmes were kept on track.

Parental Involvement in School Management. Evidence from the data indicated that School Performance Appraisal Meeting (SPAM) meetings were not in operation and had not happened in a while. The most viable means of ensuring parental involvement in school management was the PTA. Parents were involved in school activities through interactions that took place during general PTA meetings. Such meetings provided a setting where problems of the school and parents were taken into account and possible means of solutions sought.

In all seven study schools, a sense of marginal parental involvement in school management emerged from the interviews. Parents of the children in SMSSCHI as a collective were perceived to be very distant from the school, showing a feeble interest in what went on in the school. They were also described as “*dumping*” their children in the schools.

All the school heads were of the opinion that most parents did not show much interest in their children’s education. For example, parents initially showed very little enthusiasm to attend school meetings with teachers (PTA). Reasons ascribed for this apparent disinterest were attributed to many sources. The staff observed that most parents could not make the long journey to the school compounds because it was far away from the city centres and the poor transportation network on the school campus routes did not encourage them to take the trouble to make it to school meetings. A strategy to improve the

situation had to be identified and a decision was taken to hold PTA meetings on market days where there was an increased number of public transportation available within the municipalities to help with movement within the city.

One other feature of the school-home relationship was the reluctance of parents to have contact with their children once school reopened and the children had reported to school for a term of twelve weeks. Most were reluctant to spend money on school requirements, and in some cases did not make any effort to maintain family ties through visits during regular term time. Most parents virtually forgot about their children to the extent that some children had to be taken home to parents or left on the schools' campuses till parents were ready to pick them up. This had resulted in children having a feeling of alienation from the family and an enhanced sense of community with the other deaf children in the school. Children felt particularly attached to their school mates because they shared the use of sign language which promoted social interaction. One SH contributing to this discussion said that:

Some children therefore showed agitation when they had to go home after the school term... some even come back to school the when they have completed their school programme...parents cannot sign and these children feel a bond for the school because all other children were signing and they could communicate with their friends (SH- Pear School).

In three instances, a few parents though were considered partners, helping to counsel other parents with disabled children to seek help from the schools and thus serve as the point of reference in the assessment of disability for such

children. At the time of data collection, it emerged that some of such parents had brought in some support from religious bodies in the area although this was quite some time ago. In one school the head intimated that there was a vibrant collaboration between the school and parents. Parents were actively involved in the school's management and various funding avenues with industry and other voluntary organisations had come to the school through the efforts of some concerned parents. In one school for instance, one SH said:

One parent regularly gives gifts to be competed for among the teachers to serve as an incentive for good practice in the school (SH- Pear School).

Another ASH said:

One parent collaborated with a local NGO to create awareness on the need to educate their disabled children...the NGO then mobilized the parents and their children to pay a visit to the school to familiarize themselves with school activities...this was to help parents see the need to enrol their children in school (ASH- Mango School).

Figure 4 below shows a picture of a poly tank supplied to one school through the efforts of one parent.



Fig. 4. A poly tank for water storage donated to school through the efforts of a parent.

Efforts to Improve Parental Awareness and Response to PTA Meetings. Study schools have had to find ways to encourage parents to attend meetings. During PTA sessions, management took the chance to create parental awareness on the need to still maintain contact with their children throughout the period they were away from the rest of the family at home. Parents were given some rudimentary lessons in sign language so they could communicate with their children at home and thus help children feel more capable of integrating with the rest of the family during holiday periods.

Relationships between the SMSSCHI and Private Sector

To address the shortfall in school finances, Community-based organisations (CBOs), Non-Governmental Agencies and other Development Partners were routinely encouraged to support schools through financial means as well as technical and human resources to enhance the execution of projects in schools.

Relationship between SMSSCHI and NGOs. The data showed that there was a very vibrant relationship with development partners in all study schools. NGOs were the main development partners of the schools, playing a critical role in supporting the schools' budgets in cash and in kind. SHs and indeed the whole SMC had to actively and aggressively pursue assistance from these bodies as government subvention was inadequate (SH). These organisations supported the schools in the provision of food, infrastructure and other materials necessary for the running of the school. For instance, the Catholic Relief Services played a critical role in the management of the school through its school feeding supplementation programme. According to an SH:

Without the feeding programme for the school,
we could not feed the children properly...they
supply us with preserved foodstuffs which are
incorporated into the meals for the children in
the school (SH- Orange School).

This support also enabled the schools to offer a free meal a day for staff as schools in all cases were sited far from the main towns and staff could experience problems with finding meals during their break periods. However, there were concerns from the participants that some of these voluntary organisations were ending their funding support as they have had to cut back on their activities due to lack of funds from their subventing agencies from the developed world. Schools management was going to face further challenges in juggling official governmental funds to cater for school needs.

Various other bodies helped in monetary and non-monetary avenues. Financial support in aid of infrastructure development and funds for

maintenance came from the private sector, facilitating the day- to- day management of the school. For instance, some NGOs gave funds for in-service training of teachers, and some provided teaching materials. Four study schools had excellent working relationships with some international voluntary organisations including the Catholic Relief Services, World Vision International, Rotary International among a few.

At the time of the Phase 1 visit, one international development partner, an NGO, was in the process of putting up buildings for staff accommodation in one school. The project was supervised by specially trained teachers from the schools. The organisation had also provided funds for five schools to establish income-generating activities. These schools had established some farming initiatives like piggery, snail-farming, poultry farming. These initiatives were to provide some sustainable funds for schools as the NGO was phasing out its budget lines for special schools for the disabled in line with the mandatory call for the abolition of segregated schools for PWDs by the international community.

The state of the SMSSCHI relationship with the private sector, that is, the corporate world, was very rudimentary at this stage. In four schools whilst a lot of efforts had been made to establish some relationship with the various voluntary organisations that operated within those regions, responses so far had not been very encouraging. In one of these schools, the bulk of the non-governmental support for the school came from donations of a couple from Denmark who had adopted the school and regularly remitted the school for the funding of some pressing needs. As this particular ASH informed me:

This year (2007/08 academic year) we decided to make the classrooms more learner-friendly, providing more illustrations on the classroom walls...we presented our budget to the couple and they readily gave us the money...now our classrooms are brighter and the children are learning some things on their own (ASH- Pineapple School).

Utilising volunteering personnel in some staffing position was one other vital strategy the schools used to achieve an effective collaboration with these organisations. One such volunteer, who was herself deaf, collaborated with the Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) and the British Council and with support from the British High Commission produced a film for education on HIV/AIDS for deaf people using dance and sign language. This aired on national TV in Ghana to much acclaim. Individuals, who had undertaken some voluntary services at the school, put their reports on the web and these were the few sources of information that made SMSSCHI in Ghana visible to the international community. Two schools were the recipients of such volunteers from the Voluntary Services Division (VSO) of the British High Commission at the time of data collection.

Relationships between SMSSCHI and the GES

SMSSCHI maintained its relationship with the GES authorising agency in various ways. This relationship exhibited itself basically at the headquarters or national and district levels.

Relationship with GES Headquarters. The GES was responsible for the recruitment and appointment of all staff that worked within the study schools and as such exerted a lot of influence on who participated in school decision-making and activities. The GES also served as the link between schools and the Ministry of Education which was responsible for the provision of education of all forms in the country. The Ministry of Education through the GES was responsible for the bulk of the funding that financed the activities of schools, including all salaries for staff. In the execution of this responsibility guidelines were issued and had to be complied with by school management.

The data revealed that the GES was seen as an active partner in school management, maintaining its links with schools through reports from visits to schools by SEN Officers and circuit officers attached to the District Directorates of Education (DDEs). These officers liaised with the school, communities and the DDEs. They also identified children with suspected cases of disability, referring them to schools for placement. Again, this situation exemplified here that the closest link was with the immediate local directorate. Other DDEs in the region where schools were sited had a relatively low interaction with the schools.

Regular information on the execution of school activities was communicated to the GES Special Education Division (SpED) through written reports. Some verbal reports were also given through scheduled meetings with top management at the district, regional and national levels. School heads periodically visited the headquarters of the SpED for face-to-face interaction with top management. Scheduled meetings of school heads and management at headquarters are also another forum for interaction between the GES and

the SMSSCHI. Common problems and appropriate strategies for their redress were discussed at such meetings and the various levels of management of SMSSCHI got the chance to engage in meaningful dialogue and exchange of good practice.

Periodically, schools under the GES were to be given a comprehensive inspection as a diagnostic exercise to analyse the activities of each school in the country. Visits from officers from the Special Education Division of the GES headquarters periodically established some contact with the school. For a very long time, at least within the past three years, the GES had not conducted any inspection of the schools' activities. Participants reported that such inspection of the schools' activities had been few and far between. In fact since the researcher with other team members did a comprehensive inspection of one school's activities in 2002, no other inspection had taken place reflecting on the quality of the relationship existing between the school and its authorising agency. One ASH was of the view that: Inspection of the school is too minimal (ASH- Pawpaw School).

In addition to periodic school inspections, the Special Education Division of the GES offered training programmes, introducing new developments in subject areas for staff to improve on their output on a regular basis. This service at the time of data collection was rated very under-developed and participants were of the opinion that it could do with some more inputs for improvement.

Another way through which the GES maintained contact with schools was the Special Education Division's collaboration with the headquarters of the GES to institute a national award for which teachers in special schools

competed for on a yearly basis. This was to serve as recognition for the difficult tasks teachers in special schools undertook and through that boost staff morale and encourage excellence in practice.

Relationship with District Directorates of Education. In response to the on-going decentralisation of the management of the GES, District Directorates of Education (DDEs) were designated to take charge of the day-to-day management of schools within their locality. SMSSCHI had the whole of a region as its catchment area. As a school that served the whole of the region, study schools had direct links only with the school district where the school was located. This meant a very limited interaction with the local management of the GES within the region. This also meant that the schools had virtually a non-existent relationship with the management of the other district assemblies responsible for the administration of districts within the region. This low connectivity of schools and DDEs as well as district assemblies had some impact on the visibility of the school within the region. Of particular concern was the schools' inability to access the support of the management of the other district directorates of education and district assemblies within the region in the running of the school.

Participants indicated in the majority that the schools were not benefiting much from the district assemblies' development projects as each school served the whole region and not any one particular district. As it was described by a SMC chairman: "We are like a child without any parents...we don't belong to anybody" (SMCC- Pawpaw School). Cooperation between the schools and these DEOs was not close in five study schools as their very geographical

location posed a problem for interaction. All schools reported that they had very close relationships with the DDE in their immediate vicinities.

Within the GES, school districts were divided into circuits and assigned officers who went round the local schools to monitor activities and through that provided the service with a window to regulate school activities. The data indicated that Circuit supervisors and SEN Officers were the assigned link officers from the District Education Directorates (DEDs) and continued to show cooperation with schools through monitoring visits and training in some instances.

Again, it emerged from the data that such officers from the immediate local DEDs were the ones that were most closely connected to schools. These officers served as the links between the communities, schools and the GES. However, because of distances and lack of resources, officers from DEDs that were located some distance from schools were not as frequent in their visits as those who worked within the immediate vicinity of study schools. Such peripatetic teachers helped in the recruitment of pupils in other districts by referring suspected cases of disability to schools for assessment and placement where possible.

Of the seven study schools, two study schools had strong links with the local district directorate of education. One District Director had taken a keen interest in the affairs of the SMSSCHI in his district and was always ready to help with any problems the school experienced and the SH specified that:

There is a very strong relationship between the school and District Directorate...our Director has been very instrumental in lobbying the District

Assembly to extend electricity to the school campus
(SH-Pawpaw School).

In the other five study schools, the visibility of the school within the school district had some problems. For a long time, pupils from these study schools were excluded from activities like sports and cultural activities held for all children in basic schools within the district. Management had to make a strong and sustained public relations effort to insist on inclusion. As all school management indicated, currently the situation was better and the children were invited to participate in some activities for basic schools in the district:

Currently, the school is included in all activities for.

This has been achieved after persistent appeals to
the directorate (SH- Orange School).

The benefits from the inclusion of special schools in mainstream educational activities that could accrue to school management and society are therefore lost for all stakeholders.

Graphic Representation of the Relationships between SMSSCHI and Stakeholders

The links that SMSSCHI maintained with stakeholders or agencies in its environment could be represented graphically and this I have done with a system map in Fig. 4. The blobs represent the schools and the identified agencies. The degree to which each agency was involved in the management of SMSSCHI as depicted in the data is represented by how far that particular blob is far from the central blob representing school management.

The GES was found to be the agency that was most closely linked to the school and the community was found to be the farthest and thus the least

agency to be involved in school management for SMSSCHI. The implication of this representation for school management presents the need for an audit into prevailing management practices such that the identification of innovative and creative avenues to include each agency in school management could be instituted. Such a move would enable SMCs access the critical benefits that school management could derive from an active involvement. Strategies to address the challenges as identified in the challenges section of this chapter on data analysis could be the starting point from which SMSSCHI could advance their quest to increase their visibility in the Ghanaian society.

The system map also indicates the degree of permeability of each agency's system by the school. The thinner and more open the lines around the blob for a system: the more open it was to giving and receiving resources in all its forms to facilitate school activities. Both the study schools and GES were found to be open to this process. School management was very open to receive and give resources and information and thus structure decisions and activities accordingly. The community, parents and NGOs followed in that order in the degree of permeability. Again, SMCs must be aware of this fact and strategise techniques that would enable them harness all the help they could from these agencies.

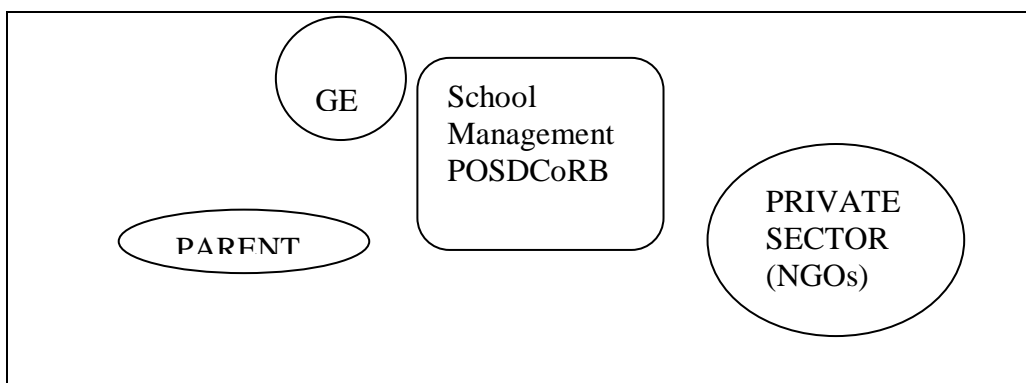


Fig.4. System map representation of the SMSSCHI interaction with agencies in its environment.

Challenges to Management Practice in SMSSCHI

School management committees (SMCs) in addressing the pressures that impinged on the school system experienced some challenges. In aggregating the data, it was interesting to note that common trends showed in the challenges school management faced in carrying out their management functions. This section discusses the challenges that emerged from the data and addresses Research Question 2: what are the organisational challenges in the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana?

Inadequate Numbers of Teachers

One major problem that School heads (SHs) identified in the management of their schools was with staffing. School management was concerned that the numbers of specially trained teachers were inadequate for the pupil numbers that were enrolled in school. As one SH put it:

We don't have enough teachers ...the pupil-teacher ratio is supposed to be 15/1 but that is not possible because there are no teachers. In our classrooms here, currently the nursery classes...each class is more than 15. In Nursery 1 they are even 34 which is supposed to be for two teachers but one teacher is handling them. In Nursery 2, they are 25 so we don't have any problem...that is manageable (SH-Coconut School).

Reasons advanced to explain this incidence were many and varied including:

Most of them (newly trained) go for the training and go to the mainstream schools because when they

come out for the 'out-segment' (placement) and they come to experience the problems that are encountered in special schools, when they are posted they just find their way into mainstream schools...they don't come at all...so for two years now, the teachers posted to my school never came. It is this year that they have posted some and they have come...so in 2004- we had four teachers, in 2005, nobody reported, in 2006, two teachers (SH-Pear School).

Another reason that was advanced for the low representation of specially trained teachers in special schools was the uncooperative attitudes of DDEs in supplying teachers to the schools. One SH said:

Because the District Director of Education does not understand it that way if you go and ask for more teachers they think you are overstaffing but if you want to go by the required 15/1 pupil/teacher ratio, the numbers we have is not enough for the children and those specially trained for the deaf... they are not here (SH-Pawpaw School).

The status of the day-to-day management in SMSSCHI as portrayed by the data articulates the disturbing placement of issues of disability within the general discourse in the country and the lack of political and societal will in actively and coherently involving PWDs in national life.

Teaching/Learning Materials (TLMs)

One other concern of SHs was that of the acquisition of appropriate TLMs for use in the teaching processes. One SH said that:

Teaching/Learning Materials(TLM) are not appropriate for the deaf ...like TLM for science and mathematics... you know our children cannot understand things in the abstract so TLM used to teach Maths and Science lessons for them to understand, we don't have them so you get a topic ... you do all efforts and the children will not understand what you are trying to say except that maybe the place is near and you can get the chance to make an excursion to the place and the children can get a chance to see what you are talking about (SH-Pawpaw School).

Parental Attitude

The data revealed one other challenge which was reflected in the general attitude of Ghanaians towards PWDs. The data pointed to the low interest parents exhibited towards their children's education. SHs expressed their dissatisfaction with the way parents collaborated with the schools in efforts to educate their children. To SHs:

Some parents' attitude towards the children is very discouraging. Some think that there is no need for their deaf children to go school so when they are talked to and they bring the children to school, they

will just come and dump them here, they will not come...and visit for three months. Some may bring them without their basic needs like toiletries, nothing. After three months, they come and take them away. Some even when they vacate the children will stay here till the following day before they come and take them...this is the third week of reopening and some parents have still not brought their children, giving excuses that they have still no money to bring them. Meanwhile all their hearing children are in school (SH- Coconut School).

Accommodation for Teachers

In an ideal situation, if teachers were to effectively carry out effective out-of-school hours' supervision, they must be housed on school campuses. All study schools did not have enough bungalows to house the required numbers of staff so supervision of pupil activities then fell on the untrained shoulders of housemothers. One SH indicated that:

Teachers are supposed to stay around and help children all day but this is not available and if you bring a graduate teacher and ask him to stay in one room how will he feel? He will go to a secondary school where he has a bungalow instead of coming here to occupy only one room... or the situation where two teachers pair up in a house...I am the only person who lives alone in my house, all other teachers

pair up in a few bungalows we have...so it is not an incentive for qualified teachers to come to the school (SH- Orange School).

If schools were to attract and retain qualified and committed staff then schools would have to be better equipped by the GES to address this situation.

Infrastructure

Closely linked to the challenge of accommodation was the critical shortage of infrastructure notably buildings for various school activities. Some observations were:

This is the only office structure we have in the school...we have so much equipment but there is no space to move, there is no administration block because we have no structures, we have demarcated the dormitory...part of it is the school's food store and the general office that can take one typist with the bursar and storekeeper having cubicles in that same area. We have three computers but there is no space to put them for the secretaries to use, so the structures are very limited making work very limited (SH- Pineapple School).

We do not have a dining hall so the children eat in the open...when it rains we have a serious problem (SH- Mango School).

We have converted classrooms for use as dormitories even though the school has been here for thirty years

now because initially it was not a special boarding school (SH- Melon School).

The picture of inadequate and poorly maintained school infrastructure was a usual feature of a significant number of basic schools in Ghana and special schools were no exception.

The data further revealed that all schools had some building projects going on and all were subvented from funds from various sources other than the assigned official funds. District assemblies were actively involved in three of the seven schools in the provision of school infrastructure.

Curriculum

Schools offered the same curriculum as mainstream schools. All subjects with the exception of French as a foreign language and a local Ghanaian language were included on the school timetable. Children in most cases had difficulty assimilating the relevance of the material of the written text they had to engage with during the teaching/learning process. As one SH explained:

At a meeting of heads we were saying that the stories in the books we were using were not suitable for teaching deaf children...there is nothing in the books that talks about a deaf girl or a blind boy doing something positive...so nothing inspires the deaf or the disabled child to associate with stories in the books. So children are not moved to go to the library with the exception of only a few who are really enthusiastic about learning. Reading materials are not disability

friendly. If there were more Helen Keller stories, disabled children may be encouraged to read (SH-Melon School).

Another problem associated with the curriculum was with adapting the curriculum to suit the educational needs of the children:

Adapting the curriculum was not going on well as teachers are not trained to do this. Training should be given so teachers can do some uniform adaptation. The suggestion has been put forward that for example, mathematics teachers in special schools should be brought together for them to identify their special needs and adapt the curriculum accordingly. This has not been done...and the children will continue to perform poorly and they will say we are not doing our work ...but there are certain things we cannot do alone. There is no association to work at this (SH-Mango School).

Pupils were reported as making very little sense of lessons when teachers did not sign for them. This was largely due to the fact that deaf children could not harness the strengths of incidental learning that most hearing children acquired and used from all sorts of media while growing up. Children with hearing impairment were largely cut off from the bulk of such knowledge that was acquired by children through everyday interaction with friends and family. Subsequently, vocabulary, as well as concepts had to be specifically

presented and taught before an application of any one particular concept can be done in the classroom.

Teachers who had formal training in the education of CHI were aware of this requirement and therefore tailored their teaching to cater for this. Where teachers had little or no training in SEN, the teaching learning process became problematic, affecting the quality of the set goals of education. The reason the data ascribed for this inefficiency was the lack of implementation of appropriate communication modes to meet the educational needs of CHI. Participants consistently made a call for the acceptance and recognition of a Ghanaian Sign Language (GSL) which would be unique to the country as against the current corrupted version of the American Sign Language (ASL).

Assessment Facilities

For effective management of the educational needs of the hearing impaired child in the classroom, school management needed to know the specific educational requirements of each individual child. The data suggest that this was a situation which placed a heavy demand on school management as the needs of individual children then became submerged in the larger issues as teachers used their intuition and basic skills to provide a general type of lessons in an attempt to teach. In the view of on SH:

Normally, before a child is admitted to the school, there should be diagnostic proceedings to know the exact situation or the hearing level of the child but we don't have that in the school and in the whole region...this happens in the hospital but it's not the best, the ladies there are not trained to do diagnostic

assessment, they can only determine the hearing levels of the child...we have been talking with the GES to set up a proper centre in every region (SH-Coconut School).

The lack of assessment centres in all regions was greatly hampering the realization of the inclusion policy mandated by the Salamanca Declaration that has been ratified by Ghana. The Disability Act of 2006 specifies that assessment centres should be set up in all regions to help in the early identification of disability for early intervention, and through that, the enhancement of the ability of the system to enculture the young for independent adult living. The low numbers of assessment centres as well as their location was therefore impeding the work of the Special Education (SpEd) Division of the Ghana Education Service (GES).

The data displayed the strain participants experienced as they struggled to engage with children brought in to the schools. All new school entrants, irrespective of age had to go through kindergarten where they were taught basic sign language and some basic concepts in preparation for formal work in higher classes. One SH said:

When they bring me a child who is too old for the kindergarten it poses a big problem ...because the older children bully the younger ones even though they all in the same class...in fact these days I ask parents of such children to take them for private tutoring so the children learn at least the alphabets and basic numeracy (SH- Orange School).

Participants were of the view that apart from the late diagnosis of disability and its associated problems, the lack of information on the level and type of hearing loss those children had made their work difficult as they had to use their limited skills in gauging the educational needs of children. This demand, management felt was beyond their professional competence and responsibilities. Children, irrespective of their loss were exposed to the same material in the classroom, negating all the inherent benefits of individualized learning, the bedrock of special education, something participants said was affecting the effectiveness of classroom interactions.

Pupil Outcomes

All efforts in education are to meet some acceptable socially constructed pupil outcomes. Defining what these targets or outcomes are has presented an on-going challenge for the education industry. Arguably, these targets or outcomes may vary from nation to nation. For most people, however, education is expected to provide literacy and numeracy and provide skills for further training, enabling the graduates to be economically productive within the larger community. Again, education should make its graduates useful members of their community. This concept of performance as an indicator of educational quality emerged from the data. Pupils were noted as performing poorly over the years in the BECE. One SH said:

Some children pass and are able to go on to Senior Secondary School (SSS) after their basic school leaving certificate examination (BECE) but like I said some parents are not serious. They just don't see why they should be wasting money on the deaf child so

when they finish here they don't have money for the child to continue to school (SH- Pear School).

The general consensus from the data was that graduates of SMSSCHI usually were not able to move on to the second level of education. For the 2006/2007 academic year, for instance, no pupil made the official grade of aggregate 24 (based on results from six subjects) for admission to senior secondary school. While this had never happened before, performance in the BECE was noted to be below average over the years, a situation some people in the country have unofficially dubbed "0% passes". One SH indicated that:

No pupil obtained the required grades for admission into the next level of schooling...I mean the Senior Secondary school...so we had to handpick some students from all the schools to form the year group for the SSS for that year (SH- Pineapple School).

This situation called for immediate action and various meetings between the schools and the Special Education Division (SpED) of the GES. Consultations between schools and the SpED resulted in some interventions being put in place to address the preparedness of pupils for the examination in subsequent years. Some gains are reported to have been made as the pass rate pattern has started to show some improvement; however, a majority of children do not perform at par with their mainstream counterparts.

Participants appeared to be working hard to bring education to their charges. However, the data indicated a very despondent view about pupil capabilities to advance on the academic ladder and ultimately very low teacher expectations from CHI. Teacher expectations for CHI were low and standards

expected of them were “very inferior”. As one departmental head told me: “these children are not capable of doing anything academic” (SH- Pineapple School). To my expression of surprise at this statement, she expanded on this view, saying that:

Maybe if you had any training in special education you will realize that these children cannot achieve anything with the brain...they simply do not have the capacity (SH- Pineapple School).

There was a subtle agreement that CHI could not cope with an academic curriculum and should be trained in a vocational curriculum, a perception among the SMSSCHI teachers as having a more economic future value.

Attitude of District Directors of Education (DDEs)

Even as school management grappled with finding viable avenues to involve parents in school management to improve on school outcomes, they further had to contend with finding strategies to engage with their local DDEs. SMSSCHI as has been previously indicated in chapter Two of this presentation is uniquely placed within the GES. In Ghana, all regions have varying numbers of districts under their administrative management. According to the designed structure of the GES, schools within a school district fell under the management jurisdiction of the District Director of Education. SMSSCHI admitted pupils from all over the region in which the schools existed, making it problematic for the placing of the school within any one particular school district within a region. In this vein, SHs contended that they faced problems of acceptance and collaboration from the local DDE:

Some DDEs don't understand the need for special education and they don't cooperate. When they have programmes, they don't invite me, if you don't go there, they don't mind me. When I first came here, they even write circular letters without giving some to our school so every week I have to go the office and ask whether there are any letters for our school, what is going on here (SH- Pear School).

To SHs, the situation was so disturbing that on several occasions in all study schools, special schools were completely marginalized by DDEs. Another SH said:

They will organise sporting activities and they will not even invite the school, meanwhile we have children who are good athletes... if I do not go there, they will not include the school...when they call head teachers' meetings we go but if you don't say anything about your school they won't do anything...since I came here three years ago, the office has never written anything anywhere asking for help for this school. I have always done all those things myself. I wrote to Ghana Education Trust Fund (GETFUND) for structures ...This water problem I wrote to GETFUND and Volta Aluminium Company (VALCO) and finally GETFUND has approved a dormitory block (SH- Pineapple School)

The challenge of poor attitudes from DDEs exemplified the problems associated with the invisibility of the special education sector within the larger Ghanaian community.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the data for Phase 1 of the data collection process. The major query of the study sought to map out the nature of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI.

Management functions were explained with an application of a conceptual framework drawn from POSDCoRB. The evidence from the data showed an active enactment of management functions in schools. The framework therefore is surmised to be a useful tool for the examination of management practices in schools. From the data, my conclusion was that the nature of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI was one which presented a homogenous display of management functions as portrayed in the planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting (POSDCoRB) framework across study schools. This homogeneity suggests well-structured management proceedings and effective monitoring to ensure conformity within schools in the GES. My concern, however, was, if schools complied with laid-down management structures for basic schools in Ghana, why then were the products of SMSSCHI not represented in further education and the world of work as their hearing counterparts? What accounted for graduates of SMSSCHI running back to the schools even after graduation? These events call for further investigation to isolate the factors that lead to this state of affairs for possible redress.

The framework was able to describe management activities, but in a mechanistic manner, unable to capture issues in inter-relationships between school management and stakeholders. To cater for this inability, I extended the POSDCoRB framework with an application of some aspects of boundary theory. Specifically, I examined the relationships or links that SMCs shared with some stakeholders in the day-to-day management of the schools.

The evidence revealed that the GES was the agency that was most closely linked to the school. This was not surprising as the schools drew their authorisation and funding from the GES. The community was found to be the least involved in school management for SMSSCHI. This was a concern as it points to a failure to realise the set aims of the decentralisation policy of government. The implications of this relationship for school management were the need for the identification of innovative and creative avenues to include each stakeholder in school management.

There were critical benefits that schools could derive from an involvement of stakeholders in school management. In my opinion, strategies to address the challenges SMCs faced in the day-to-day management of schools as identified in the challenges section of this chapter on data analysis could be the starting point from which SMSSCHI could advance their quest to increase their visibility in the Ghanaian society.

The data portrayed the nature of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI as one that was influenced directly by the GES and contrary to my initial assumptions, to a very minimal extent by communities, parents and NGOs. I reached the conclusion that I had been able to describe the day-to-day management of study schools, indicating management practices that ensured

the operation of education in study schools. Participants had talked about how management was practised on a day-to-day basis. I have identified areas of concern in the daily activities of SMCs. I have further described the nature of relationships that SMCs enjoyed with stakeholders in the environment and how these interactions determined the practice of management in schools.

As indicated in the methodology section, there was a paucity of previous studies to inform any conclusions on the management of SEN schools in Ghana. This first part of data collection was therefore done to give me an overview of the management that went on in study schools. The data obtained helped me to arrive at conclusions on the nature of the day-to-day management of study schools. This picture of the nature of the management in SMSSCHI was captured from the views of members of the SMC. However, the evidence to support my conviction was obtained from the viewpoints of participants who were directly involved in school management. Was it possible that I could gain further insights into the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI by talking to some of the identified stakeholders? I was curious to discover how participants from the stakeholder groups also felt about their involvement in school management. I made the decision to further explore the relationships that schools had with stakeholders from the viewpoint of members of these groups. This I hoped will yield evidence that will provide further insights into the description of management in study schools.

While further exploring the questions posed during Phase 1, the focus of data collection and analysis shifted during Phase 2 of data collection. The major aim of Phase 2 was to examine particular aspects of the management of SMSSCHI focusing on the policy arena within which SEN was undertaken in

the country and an examination of boundary issues in the day-today management of schools from the perspective of stakeholders. The methodological considerations and the data for Phase 2 are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR PHASE 2

Overview

The aim for my research interest was to explore the day-to-day management of state-maintained special schools for children with hearing impairment (SMSSCHI) in Ghana. In conformity with the two-phase design of my data collection process, I explored the methodological issues and data presentation for Phase 1 in the preceding chapters of 4 and 5. This current chapter submits the methodology for Phase 2 of the study.

Drawing from the same methodological considerations for Phase 1, I present the rationale that guided the choice of research design, data sources, data collection processes and instruments for Phase 2. I further explore measures employed to ensure credibility and rigour in the procedures that generated data to answer research questions 6-8. In addition, I discuss data analysis strategies, ethical considerations, my relationship to the study and finally end with methodological challenges. The chapter is in eight sections: (1) Research Methodology; (2) Conducting the study; (3) Establishing credibility; (4) Generalizability of research findings; (5) Data Analysis Procedures; (6) Ethical Issues; (7) My role in the study; (8) Methodological reflections.

For Phase 2, the aim was to explore particular aspects of the management of SMSSCHI and their implications for the quality of education for CHI in Ghana. Research questions set to realise this aim were designed as follows next:

6. What educational policies influence the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana?

7. What are the boundary issues in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI in Ghana?

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative perspective to describe the day- to-day management of SMSSCHI. I wanted to understand the reality of the management of special schools as a lived experience, a phenomenon that was enacted from day to day in study schools. As already explained in Chapter 4, the epistemological and ontological leanings of my understanding are towards the qualitative paradigm. I have explained the theoretical underpinnings at length drawing on the literature on undertaking research in educational settings, and the arguments that support as well as disputed the usefulness of employing a qualitative methodology in my study (Creswell, 2007; Sarantakos, 2005; Patton, 2002). My conclusions from these thoughts or arguments also guided the Phase 2 data collection process.

After extensive examination of the data for Phase 1, I drew the conclusion that management was an actively lived one and could be described with the use of the POSDCoRB framework. Study schools just like mainstream schools undertook management activities that should result in schools and pupils achieving the set national aims of education. I was able to arrive at this

conclusion based on the stories I had been told by members of the school who were engaged in enacting the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI.

My conclusions were also influenced by the meanings I derived from the observation of some school activities and a review of some relevant documents. Was it possible that further insights could be attained with a further exploration of the same management issues through a deeper observation process? Could shifting emphasis to an application of boundary theory to management issues of interest provide new insights? Could another set of participants bring different meanings to an understanding of the management of SMSSCHI? These were the questions that guided the planning and execution of data collection for Phase 2 and the research questions that were formulated follow next.

For Phase 2 of data collection, I was interested in exploring pertinent issues in the day- to- day management of study schools from the views of some stakeholders. To further deepen my understanding of the management issues of interest, observations of school activities were also employed. I was curious to examine the meanings that stakeholders (as identified by school management) brought to a description of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. I was equally curious to observe school activities to verify the insights that the data for Phase 1 had brought to the study conclusions.

Identification of Data Sources

I invited some members from my identified stakeholder groups as participants to interrogate the relationships that existed between schools and stakeholders, (refer to Chapter 2, p.45). As Arksey and Knight (1999) suggests:

...the sampling of participants should be done with great care as it could affect the information that will be collected and thus might influence the researcher's understanding and interpretation... (p. 56).

Participants were grouped into two, SMC and stakeholder groups, for data collection to address research question 7.

The Cases. For the observation dimension of my Phase 2 data collection to obtain data to address Research Questions 7 and 8, I opted to study three schools out of the previous seven schools with an adaptation of the theoretical sampling approach (Cohen et al., 2005; Patton, 2002). Again the country was zoned into three and a school purposely chosen from a zone (refer to Appendix C).

Case Study School 1. The first site to be visited was the Pineapple School. This school was one of the newest schools to be established in the country. It was selected to represent the northern part of the country and it would be interesting to note if the newness of its establishment could account for variances in management practices. For a detailed discussion of this school site refer to Chapter 5 (p.133).

Case Study School 2. The second school to be included in the study was the Melon school. This school was interesting because it was one of the oldest to be established and had traditions that should contribute to unique trends in management proceedings. A detailed discussion of the school site can be found in Chapter 5 (p.133).

Case Study School 3. The Pear school was the third and last school to be included. The unique feature of this school was in its recognition as one of the more popular schools attracting a lot of media attention for varied reasons. Was it possible that its peculiar location would have any meanings for management practice? A detailed discussion of the school and its background can be found in Chapter 5 (from p.129).

Participants. In addition to the SMC members of schools, some stakeholders were also interviewed. The responses of these participants provided information to partly address Research Question 8 which explored boundary issues in school management. The participants invited to the study are set out in Table 6.

Table 6: Distribution of Phase 2 Data Sources and Dates Interviewed

Date	Data Source	Acronym	No.
9/03/08 - 13/03/08	Pineapple School (SH,ASH,HOD)		3
16/03/08 -20/03/08	Melon School (SH,ASH,HOD)		3
	Parent 1	PTA1	1
02/04/08	NGO official 1	NGO1	1
02/04/08	NGO official 1	NGO2	1
Table 6 continued			
06/04/08 -10/04/08	Pear School (SH,ASH,HOD)		3
15/04/08	SMSSCHI Graduate 1 (Alumni)	SMG1	1
	SMSSCHI Graduate 2 (Alumni)	SMG2	1
19/05/08	Academic 1	AC1	1
	Academic 2	AC2	1
05/06/08	Parent 2	PTA2	1
Total			17

Key:

1. SH-School Head teacher :
2. ASH-Deputy Head teacher :
3. HOD- Head of Department:
4. SMCC -School Management Committee Chairman:
5. SENCO- Special Education Schedule Officer from the Regional Education office.

These participants were invited to participate in the study based on theoretically defined criteria. The major criterion was that these participants were considered to possess the relevant information that will generate data to help me make conclusions about my research interests (Cohen et. al., 2005; Patton, 2002).

Parents (PTA). The two parents interviewed were male. This was very interesting to observe as in most cases in Ghana, mothers were more likely to be the ones to accompany children to school. PTA1 was a tradesman and his child had been in the school for five years. He had taken the decision to bring his child to the school since he recognised the benefits of formal education. Even though the child was post lingual and had some residual hearing, for PTA1, he chose the special school for his child because he felt that was where the child could get the best specialised care for her disability.

PTA2 was a trader and his child had been in the school for two years. His child was profoundly deaf and had no speech. It was interesting to note that this parent brought his daughter to this school which was outside his region. As has been previously explained in Chapter 2, of the 12 SMSSCHI in the country, with the exception of one region, all of the nine regions had a school each. The parent's choice of school was influenced by the fact that the only day SMSSCHI was located in his region. He indicated that his child could not stand the daily stress of travelling to and from the school so he chose to bring her to a boarding SMSSCHI. Arguably, this reason for the parental choice of school pointed to a lack of awareness on the current philosophies on disability which advocated for mainstreaming.

Alumni (SMG.) I introduced the voices of two adult alumni of SMSSCHI in the study in recognition of the “nothing about us without us” (UN Enable, 2006) philosophy in disability issues. The participants were both females and were executive members of the Regional and National Association of the Deaf. They had rich data on SMSSCHI and could bring their unique experiences to the study. In addition, one participant was a teacher in one of the schools and the other, a teacher from another SMSSCHI who at the time of data collection was on further studies.

Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) officials. I invited two officials from the NGOs who had sustained interaction with schools for over ten years. Of the two participants, one was male and the other was female. NGO1 had extensive experience with the field of SEN and offered a detailed analysis of programmes executed in special schools over the years. NGO2 was experienced and gave an overview of the work of the NGO within the social sector of the country.

Academics. To deepen my understanding of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI, I pursued the meanings that two academics in SEN could bring to bear on my query. The participants were one male and one female. The academics had worked and researched extensively within the SEN sector and possessed rich information on the schools.

Instrumentation

Drawing from my experiences from Phase 1, I utilised semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis to arrive at the data. The details of each instrument are discussed next. Again, I was guided in the understanding from the literature in the usefulness of applying multiple

methods to collect data about the same issues (Cohen et al., 2005; Patton, 2002) to increase the credibility of research findings and conclusions.

Semi-Structured Interviews

For the school visits the semi-structured interviews used during Phase 1 was used for data collection. This time however, following the constructs identified in POSDCoRB (e.g. P-planning etc.), the questions posed were: has there been any change in the “how?”, “who?”, “why?”, “when?” and “what?” of the construct was my focus. Through my seeking for variances that might have occurred with the passage of time, I was hoping to identify, if any, possible changes in school management practices and subsequently pursue reasons for the change.

My initial interaction with the stakeholder group of participants indicated their lack of information on the day-to-day activities of school management in study schools. I shifted focus from the use of the first part of the interview schedule to the second part of the schedule which explored the schools’ relationships or links with agencies in their environment (refer to **Appendix G**). Again questions including the avenues in which the stakeholder interacted with the school were examined.

Document Analysis

A number of documents that were connected to my research interests were reviewed. Of particular interests were school reports, examination trend reports, policy documents on mainstream basic education and SEN education and sample reports from the GES headquarters and other research reports from some country studies on education in the country. Document examination

enabled me to establish trends in some cases and generally harvest data to inform the study.

As indicated in Chapter 4, the basic advantage in the use of documents in data collection was that the researcher does not intrude: "... upon or alter the setting in ways that the investigator might" (Merriam & Associates, 2002; p.13). Again, data from document analysis facilitated the validation of the information picked up through the other research methods during data collection.

Observation

One useful technique for my obtaining data was the use of observation as a data collection tool. While I had done some observation during Phase 1, the short period of time I spent in schools did not offer enough opportunities for adequate data to be captured. The Phase 2 observation period enabled me to be immersed in the day-to-day enactment of school management. From the insights gained here, I was able to verify the information that I had gained during Phase 1.

Conducting the Study

Data activities for the Phase 2 data collection period took place in two different dimensions. One dimension took on the observation of some school activities to obtain data in a bid to understand the day-to-day management of schools. The second dimension focused on an interview of some stakeholders who I purposively invited to participate in the study based on their assumed links to schools.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork for Phase 2 extended between March 2008 and June 2008 with visits to school sites and visits to participants in their offices for data collection. I travelled across the country on the most amazing journey I had made. With the experience from the Phase 1 data collection period under my belt I set out with loads of confidence to commence fieldwork.

In this second phase of data collection, I set out to interview officials from the agency responsible for social care but try as I would, I could not get any official to commit to a meeting. I therefore opted to interview two academics in SEN who possessed extensive experience in the practice and research of SEN in the country. I was expecting that these academics will have similar overview of the SEN terrain as the officials from the social services. In another situation, my first search for a parent to interview was fraught with adventure as I had to make repeated calls and travel up and down one town before I could finally find one to interview. My choice of actions pointed to elements of ethnography emerging in the study at this time. As Hammersly and Atkinson (2007) explain, ethnography involved differing processes where the researcher using overt and covert strategies participates in the daily lives of people for an extended period of time. Such strategies may include: "...watching what happens, listening to what is said and/or asking questions through formal and informal interviews" (p.3). Any other strategies including collecting documents and artefacts were useful in gathering data.

From this explanation it can be surmised that a researcher enters the field with some pre-conceived ideas about the area and interests. During fieldwork, however, the focus of the study shifts and may be re-directed as the

phenomenon under investigation unfolds. Through these processes, I formed an impression of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. I entered the Phase 2 fieldwork with pre-conceived ideas derived from the literature and my own experience of the field of education in Ghana on the ‘how?’ and ‘what?’ of data on school management I was going to collect. As the days and events unfolded, I had to adopt a flexible approach to better capture the phenomenon of school management, shifting focus from individuals and interactions that I had not anticipated before the period.

Pursuing fieldwork in a flexible manner enabled a close and prolonged contact with participants, allowing useful insights on school management to emerge (Silverman, 2006). I made contacts by telephone with the participants that I had identified and arranged visits. An overview of fieldwork activities are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Phase 2 Fieldwork Activities

Date	Data Source	Activities
9/03/08 - 13/03/08	Pineapple School	Weeklong observation of school activities
16/03/08 - 20/03/08	Melon School	Weeklong observation of school activities
02/04/08	Parent 1	Interview and interaction
06/04/08 - 10/04/08	NGO official 1	Interview and interaction
15/04/08	Pear School	Weeklong observation of school activities
	SMSSCHI Graduate 1	Interview and interaction
	SMSSCHI Graduate 2	Interview and interaction
19/05/08	Academic 1	Interview and interaction
	Academic 2	Interview and interaction
05/06/08	Parent 2	Interview

Gaining Access. The processes I followed to gain access to participants were patterned along the same lines that I followed for Phase 1. Since this project was one study with two phases of data collection, the theoretical and methodological considerations were the same for each phase. It will be useful to make reference to my discussion on these issues from Chapter 4 (p.90).

Since I had already had some interaction with the school sites, gaining access to the study school sites was easy. All I had to do was to call the SHs to schedule visit to their sites. With parents, the SHs served as the gatekeepers. They kindly called parents to introduce me and the research to them after which we scheduled meetings for later interaction.

The process of gaining audience with professionals and academics was very straight forward. I called into the organisation to obtain direct contact with my participants. I then called to arrange visits and subsequently conducted interviews. I commenced data collection with confidence as by the second phase of data collection, I was very conversant with the issues of interest to me and I had gained some experience in drawing out the relevant information from participants.

Gaining Informed Consent. As previously discussed in Chapter 4, I opted to use a consent seeking letter which participants had to read and sign. The agreement to sign the document indicated participants' willingness to be involved in interviews. Participants were assured of their anonymity and their right to withdraw from the interviews at any time they felt uncomfortable. This precaution was in recognition of the dictates of the British Educational Research Association ([BERA] 2004) Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research that sought to protect research participants. With each

participant, I indicated my techniques of insuring anonymity, plans for the storage and use of information given to me, as well as the details of the research indicators outlined in my interview schedule.

Observation Sessions. As part of my data gathering activities, I used observation as one of my techniques. Describing the processes, on arrival at a study site I contacted the SH and ASH to explain my intentions for the data collection period in their schools. I then immersed myself in the schools, sitting in a quiet spot in the beginning until people got used to my presence on the school compound. By the third day, I was recognised and I could sense that people were more open to my questions that I sometimes posed in trying to understand events as they occurred.

For the school visits, my observation stretched between 7.00 am in the mornings to 3.00 pm in the afternoons. I rambled around the school compound, sitting in lessons, watching interactions that went on in the schools to get a sense of the lived day-to-day management in schools. My roaming took cognisance of activities that portrayed the enactment of management activities as described in the interview schedule (refer to Appendix G). Such activities included morning assemblies, lessons in progress, group meetings, school meals and other social interactions between staff, students and community members who visited the school. I also observed the condition of school facilities including libraries, classroom and dining rooms, water sources and other utilities, playgrounds as well as notice boards.

I recorded my impressions with short notes. I tried to do this unobtrusively as I wanted to avoid antagonising participants by projecting a simulation of an inspection visit. I took some photos (a detailed discussion on

the photos in my study can be found in Chapter 4, p.123) of school scenes to serve as reminders, taking care to avoid children in recognition of protection issues. I further wrote down my impressions at the end of the day, making notes to guide my activities for subsequent visits.

Interviewing Sessions. My application of the interview schedule with stakeholders was planned to be conducted with the use of the same instrument that was used for Phase 1 data collection. As previously indicated, I had to make modifications to this plan. All participants quickly informed me that they were not informed enough to give any information on the day-to-day management activities of the schools. However, they could readily access the terrain of SEN practice in the country, with particular emphasis on the interactions that occurred between them and the schools. Probing took on a more ethnographic tone, with participants given prompts and allowed to talk in any order and intensity about issues. Participants were encouraged to respond to questions like: “how do you assess the relationship between the school and your organisation?; In what ways do you collaborate with schools?”; ‘How do you monitor the resources that you supply to schools?”; “What value does your organisation’s contribution to the schools have for the education that CHI received?”; “What challenges do you experience in your dealings with the schools?”; “What strategies do you adopt to address identified challenges?”

In the active process of interactions, I observed the caution expressed by van de Mescht (2002), that researchers should be aware of strong personal agendas that could compromise interpretive enquiry, stressing that:

...questions...too strongly located within a
preconceived theoretical framework, allowing little

space in which participants might elaborate and through language, metaphor, anecdote and symbol begin to give meaning to reality (p.47).

With the permission of participants, I recorded interviews on an MP3 and subsequently transcribed tape recordings verbatim for analysis. A more detailed discussion of my data gathering techniques is available in Chapter 4 (p. 100).

Establishing Credibility

Qualitative research paradigm as an alternative paradigm observes certain protocols to achieve the quality of research findings and conclusions. For Silverman (2006), there was the need to: "...convince your audience that the procedures you used did ensure that your methods were reliable and that your conclusions were valid..." (p.310). The literature identifies constructs like "credibility", "trustworthiness", and "transferability". During the data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting stages, various strategies were employed to establish the quality of the findings i.e., that they are correct, believable and trustworthy (Bryman, 2005; Silverman, 2002).

Thick Rich Description

As indicated previously in earlier chapters, my research report is done with the evidence from the data in thick rich description to expound on discussions (Silverman, 2002). The quotes enhance the discussion and increase the credibility of the findings as the evidence that supports a point of discussion does not emanate from the researcher. Data displayed in my report could be surmised not to be a "cooked" data (Bryman, 2005; Silverman, 2002).

The Multi-case Approach

My study has employed a multi-case design to obtain data in this phase of data collection just like the phase 1. This approach has allowed conclusions to be reached based on the recognition of the management issues of interest across a number of cases, giving credence and stability to the existence of a particular management issue (Bryman, 2005; Silverman, 2002). Again, the use of different data sources has allowed comparisons to be made on views expressed on management issues to give a consistent determination of a particular management issue of interest to the research.

Prolonged and Persistent Time in the Field

In trying to understand the practice of the day-to-day management of the schools, I studied the phenomenon over a period of time, approximately over one academic year. This prolonged interaction in the field helped me to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the management of SEN situations in Ghana (Silverman, 2006; Creswell, 2003).

Triangulation

My understanding from the literature points to the use of triangulation to increase credibility in the study. While this term is commonly used in connection with quantitative measures, it is equally applicable to qualitative measures even though the strategies that are employed to arrive at these conclusions may be different (Creswell, 2003; Silverman, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

For this phase, I used three types of triangulation: multi-case or data sources explored management issues through the views of different groups of people, multiple-theory enabled me to understand the phenomenon of school

management from different angles so that I could explain management of SEN in a comprehensive discussion and finally multi-data gathering approaches helped to strengthen findings as the flaws in one application of one method was compensated for by the other (Creswell, 2003; Silverman, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994). A detailed discussion on this is available in Chapter 4.

Mechanically Recorded Data

I recorded events and my impressions through notes and diary-keeping and photos. This action helped tremendously especially during the analysis stage, reducing any discrepancies that could have risen in the accounts due to errors in recall. The literature attests to the ability of diaries, photos and tapes to provide a permanent and ready reference for continual examination of research data to arrive at conclusions (Bryman, 2005; Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002).

A summary of the various processes for Phases 2 are represented graphically below in Fig. 5.

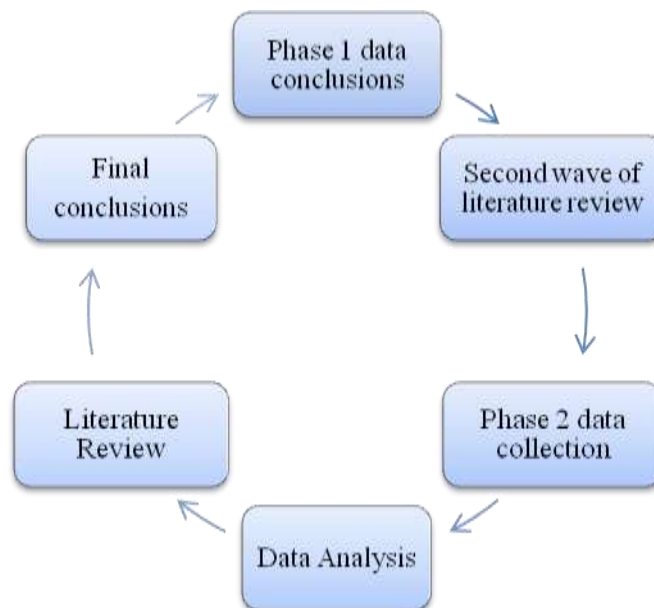


Fig. 5 A summary of research processes for Phase 2

Generalisability of Findings

The issue of generalisability in qualitative measures takes on a different hue from that of quantitative measures. As discussed in Chapter 4, the findings and conclusions from this study can be done with caution. As the conclusions were drawn from case-studies, generalisations can be done to the theory on school management of SEN. For Creswell (2003), case studies are “generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes” (p.11). A detailed discussion is available in Chapter 4.

Ethical Issues

As previously discussed in Chapter 4, ethical issues were addressed with an application of the BERA guidelines. For instance, one guideline talks about the need for researchers to have: “...a responsibility to be mindful of the cultural, religious, gendered and other significant differences within the research population in the planning, conducting, and reporting of their research” (p. 5). In recognition of this, I observed ethical issues in the use of processes to ensure the privacy and dignity of participants.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of participants was achieved in two ways as discussed next.

Public Confidentiality

I indicated to participants my intention to use any information revealed to me exclusively for research purposes. During the presentation of my research report I have used synonyms to camouflage the presence of individuals in the study (Sarantakos, 2005). All direct quotes used in the report were with the permission of participants and recording interviews were done with the

informed consent of participants. In addition, all photography was done after permission had been sought from participants.

Network Confidentiality

During the data collection process, I was particular not to divulge the information given me by one participant to another. In one instance, two ASHs subtly talked about their discontent with the practice of management within the school. The two ASHs were apprehensive about their thoughts getting back to the heads. I had to reassure them of the confidentiality promised at the beginning and the use of responses purposively for research before they opened up to express their impressions of issues.

Privacy of Participants

My choice of questions and opportunities were carefully chosen to ensure the privacy of participants. As previously indicated in Chapter 5, issues concerning details of budgetary allocations and actual expenditure of school budgets had to be explored carefully. This was in recognition of the tradition of not digging intimate information of an individual's finances that pervades the Ghanaian society. Interviews were conducted in private and on a one-to-one basis to allow participants to freely express themselves.

Dignity of Participants

The need to guarantee the dignity of my participants during data gathering processes was constantly recognised. Participants' right to withdraw at any time during interactions was made clear to all. In one instance, one participant declined to comment on the SEN sector, refusing to offer any assessment. The reason advanced to explain this refusal was that it was the assigned duty of the public relations officer of the organisation to offer opinions and any

assessment advanced may be expressed as being the position of the organisation. In spite of all assurances to the contrary, the information I obtained was based on the operations of the organisation within the SEN sector. I accepted this position and we terminated the interview as I recognised the right of the participant to privacy.

Gaining Informed Consent

All interactions with my participants were carried out with their expressed consent in recognition of BERA guidelines. After a declaration of my intentions and purposes for the research study, I asked participants to read and sign a consent form to indicate their willingness for an interaction to take place (refer to Appendix F). The form which was left with the participants had my contact information as well as that of my supervisors. Participants therefore had all full assurances that should there be any problems with my interpretation of their information they would have the opportunity for reply.

Data Analysis Procedures

My analysis of the Phase 2 data was carried out in part by following the steps described in Chapter 4. As I had indicated earlier on in Chapter 4, the data analysis phase in a qualitative study was not a discrete phase. It was an iterative process, intimately intertwined with all the other processes of the research. Especially for Phase 2, regular references were made to the Phase 1 data to help me make meaning of management issues, a process referred to as the “noticing, collecting and thinking model” (Seidel, 1998). The data collection process generated large quantities of data generated by transcripts and observation field notes. The data analysis followed the three waves described by Miles and Huberman (1994) as follows;

1. Data reduction through an examination and re-examination of the transcripts, compressing and reducing the information without losing the key message;
2. Data display, a process which involves the summarisation of information on a data display sheet;
3. The third step involved drawing conclusions on the responses from the other cases, verifying them with conclusions from observation and data from documents.

Analysis of Interviews

Data that were generated with the use of interviews was used to answer Research Question 8. For this phase of data collection, the POSDCoRB framework could not be used in whole as the stakeholder participant group did not possess the necessary information to generate such data.

For the stakeholder group, I identified themes focused on a part of the POSDCoRB matrix with an emphasis on the linkages section. Amalgamating my insights from the POSDCoRB and boundary issues in management, I analysed data based on themes from the literature and went on to categorise the data as follows:

Boundary Issues indicators (Hernes, 2004);

1. Physical Boundary
2. Psychological boundary
3. Social boundary

Once again, the details answering questions of “who?”, “when?”, “what?” and “where?”, “how?” of the boundary issues that moderated the practice of school management were explored.

Analysis of Documents

I examined official policy documents from the GES and study reports from some international research consortiums. The examination yielded further empirical illumination on the policies on mainstream education as well as SEN education. This process generated data to address Research Question 7 in particular and all others in part.

In addition, the documentation including short histories, strategic plans, and school reports collected from schools during Phase 1 were further examined. This examination helped to illuminate the discussion on the policy and boundary dimensions of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI.

Analysis of Observations

The observations data was analysed with an application of the POSDCoRB framework developed and used during Phase 1. Other themes were analysed with the boundary theory.

My Role in the Study

Creswell, quoting Locke et al. (2000), suggests that the researcher's role in a study imposes a number of: "...strategic, ethical, and personal issues into the qualitative research process" (p.184). The ensuing discussion focuses on ways (my bias, my status, gaining access,) through which I engaged with participants throughout the study.

My Bias

As discussed earlier in Chapters 1 and 4, I approached this study with a passion for disability issues as I had felt some "handicappedness" during my early schooldays. I had to be careful not to bring this passion in to my probing and consistently reminded myself to comply with the set objectives of the

study. Again, I had to consciously make the effort to subject myself to the guiding principles of the Ethics outlined by BERA and general principles of the GES for conducting research in schools in Ghana. This was to minimize my bias from colouring my interpretation of issue.

My Status

My status as a teacher and student pursuing a PhD quickly opened doors with participants. In one instance, I was surprised to find that one participant already had some knowledge of me as I had taught his wife in a course about three years earlier. Again, the academics I interviewed were my lecturers from my undergraduate days. The previous teacher-student relationship ensured that I was speedily given a slot for interviews. I was careful to distant myself from the probing and to stay focused on the objects of the interviews and not to allow personal relationships to impact my probing.

Reflections on Data Collection

Every research is accomplished alongside one problem or the other. This study was equally faced with some challenges which are discussed next.

Access to Participants

While it was relatively easy to get into contact with most participants, officials of the social care department could not be accessed easily. When I did get someone to grant an interview, I obtained very little relevant information as the department's programmes that should have helped in the management of SEN had been truncated due to lack of funds. I therefore had to drop this group as a line of investigation.

Getting access to parents was also problematic. As has been discussed elsewhere in this report, schools were located some distances from the local

residences of pupils. I had to try and access parents who resided in the immediate vicinity of schools and this could not be achieved in one zone.

Access to Research Sites

The challenge of access took on a new dimension during Phase 2. The vehicle I was travelling with broke down and I had to resort to the use of public transport on some occasions. This stretched the period of fieldwork and limited flexibility in my movements.

Access to Official Documentation

As previously discussed in Chapter 4 one of my greatest challenges was laying hands on documentation for analysis. By the second phase, however, I had gained some experience in retrieving such information. Again, a school mate had been posted to the GES and through this contact I got some vital statistics on study schools that were not available during Phase 1.

Concluding Comments

This chapter has focused on the presentation of the methodological issues that guided the conduct of Phase 2 data collection. The chapter has provided an examination of the literature to provide theoretical grounding for the various processes of organizing the research that guided the conduct of Phases 1 of my study. The evidence suggests that the case-study was a cogent instrument and should provide valid insights for the analysis of management issues in SMSSCHI.

Data sources that provided information to address research questions for this phase were drawn from different sources. To facilitate observation, three schools were selected and the SMC of study schools were briefly interviewed. Additional information was drawn from official documentation from the GES

and Ministry of Education and Science and Sports (MOESS) and research reports on countrywide analysis of the educational sector. Other insights were gained from the perspectives of stakeholders made up of parents, academics, NGO officials and alumni.

The data collection processes to a large extent duplicated the processes utilised during Phase 1. I therefore utilised a variety of instruments including document analysis, interviews and observation to obtain data. The justification for the choice of instrumentation, based on the literature formed part of the discussion.

Drawing from BERA ethical guidelines for the conduct of research, I discussed ethical issues. I opted to explore ethics concerning the confidentiality, privacy, dignity issues to protect participants during the data collection process.

Data analysis procedures issues for the phase 2 data collection process also examined the use of content analysis of official documentation and research reports and the use of the POSDCoRB framework to partly analyse interviews. Finally, an application of boundary measurement indicators (Herne, 2004) to explore the boundary issues in school management was done.

I further explored my role in the research with a discussion on how my bias and passion for SEN issues could colour my thinking processes. I pointed to the need to continuously submit to the dictates of the BERA guidelines to minimise any possible negative consequences in the study.

In the final section of this chapter, I examined challenges I experienced with access to study sites and official documentation encountered during the study. The next section in this report focuses on the presentation of the Phase 2 data.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PHASE 2 DATA PRESENTATION

Overview

The literature review from Chapter 2 concludes in part that disability issues in Ghana were moderated by some national and international policies. The chapter again demonstrated ways in which boundary issues manifested themselves in organisations like the school. The issues of concern to me were the extent to which these policies influenced the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. Secondly, how did School Management Committees (SMCs) and stakeholders of the school envision their roles within school management? This data presentation explores the policy arena for the practice of SEN and how boundary issues in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI were enacted between the schools and stakeholders within their environment.

Conclusions from the Phase 1 data indicated that management issues identified in the POSDCoRB framework were found to be homogenously executed in all study schools, as such three schools were selected for study during Phase 2. The three schools were selected to represent the three sectors of the country i.e. north, middle and south sections (refer to Appendix C). In addition, officials of two international non-governmental organisations

(NGOs) that closely collaborated with the schools, two parents and two hearing impaired adult graduates of SMSSCHI who were also officials of the Ghana Association of the Deaf and two academics in SEN were interviewed.

While further exploring the questions posed during Phase 1, the focus of analysis shifted during Phase 2 of data collection. The major aim of Phase 2 was to examine particular aspects of the management of SMSSCHI with a focus on the policy arena within which SEN was undertaken in the country and boundary issues in the day-to-day management of schools from the focus of stakeholders. This section of my report presents the data obtained through interviews, document analysis and observations for Phase 2. This chapter analysed the data based on the initial research questions. Data were obtained from semi-structured interviews, document analysis and observation in line with initial research questions.

Participants

Parents

The two parents interviewed were both male. This was very interesting to observe as in most cases in Ghana, mothers were more likely to be the ones to take children to school. PTA1 was a tradesman and his child had been in the school for five years. He had taken the decision to bring his child to the school since he recognised the benefits of formal education. Even though the child was post lingual and had some residual hearing, for PTA1, he chose the special school for his child because he felt that was where the child could get the best specialised care for her disability.

PTA2 was a trader and his child had been in the school for two years. His child was profoundly deaf and had no speech. It was interesting to note that

this parent brought his daughter to this school which was outside his region. As had been previously explained in Chapter 2 of the 12 SMSSCHI in the country, with the exception of one region, all of the nine regions had a school each. The parent's choice of school was influenced by the fact that the only day SMSSCHI was located in his region. He indicated that his child could not stand the daily stress of travelling to and from the school so he chose to bring her to a boarding SMSSCHI. Arguably, this reason for the parental choice of school pointed to a lack of awareness on the current philosophies on disability which advocated for mainstreaming.

Alumni

I introduced the voices of two adult alumni of SMSSCHI in the study in recognition of the “nothing about us, without us” philosophy in disability issues (UN Enable, 2006). The participants were both females and were executive members of the regional and national association of the deaf. They had rich data on SMSSCHI and could bring their unique experiences to the study. In addition, one participant was a teacher in one of the schools and the other, a teacher from another SMSSCHI was at the time of data collection on further studies.

Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) officials

I invited two officials from the NGOS who had sustained interaction with schools for over ten years. Of the two participants, one was male and the other was female. NGO1 had extensive experience with the field of SEN and offered a detailed analysis of programmes executed in special schools over the years. NGO2 was experienced and gave an overview of the work of the NGO over time.

Academics

To deepen my understanding of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI, I pursued the meanings that two academics in SEN could bring to bear on my query. The participants were one male and one female. The academics had worked and researched extensively within the SEN sector and possessed rich information on the schools.

Emerging Issues in the POSDCoRB of the Day-to-Day

Management of Schools

For Phase 2 of data collection, I further pursued the examination of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. With the continued use of the POSDCoRB framework, I talked to SMCs during the second wave of data collection. This time, the questions were more of what changes had occurred in the management functions in the school. I observed that there had been very few changes in the enactment of management functions in schools. My attention for the second phase data therefore explored emerging issues from the previously accessed data.

Pineapple School

From the interviews with the school head (SH), assistant school head (ASH) and head of department (HOD), it came to light that the enactment of POSDCoRB in the school had experienced very little change between the two data collection waves. The major change in this study school was the implementation of the strategic plan for the school. Some needs identified in the plan were the designing of posters to introduce some colour into classrooms, extension of electricity to school campus and the rejuvenation of the school's walled garden. I was taken round by the ASH to observe how

these projects had been successfully completed. The SMC enthusiastically talked about how the strategic plan had directed management activities to improve school conditions. In the words of the SH:

the strategic plan has kept us on track...some achievements have been made and our children are now having a congenial atmosphere to work in... academic work has improved...both teachers and pupils are motivated and we hope this will improve on the quality of our services (SH).

The ASH indicated that:

The children are really excited with the introduction of electricity to the campus... 'prep' time can now be done in the evenings leaving the afternoons free for extracurricular activities...some are gardening but the boys really enjoy the football games (ASH).

The HOD observed that:

Work in the school is much more easier now...the children are able to work at night expanding communication opportunities for interaction...you know these children sign so they are not able to communicate in the dark...previously they had to go to bed very early (HOD).

Melon School

Management functions in this study school were unchanged. The SH indicated that the GES has directed the head's transfer from the school. My

interaction with the head was very brief during the week I spent in the school as preparations for the transfer were in process. The ASH was scheduled to proceed on retirement but had been asked to stay on until a substantive head had been posted to the school. The situation as I witnessed it, illustrated the constant changes that went on in school leadership. This situation had implications for the organising and directing functions in the school. As the SH indicated:

I don't know what to do...I have so many plans for the school...we have made so many contacts with organisations to help in the provision of some school facilities...I do not wish to go... I don't know what is going to happen (SH).

The rest of school activities went on as scheduled throughout the week I spent in the school.

Pear School

In study school 3 the emerging issue in school management was the retirement of the ASH and the appointment of a new officer to take up that post. I interviewed the new ASH but evidently, there was nothing new to add to the data that I had collected during Phase 1. From my observation, I realised that some school buildings had been completed while a new structure to replace the dilapidated structure that housed the carpentry department of the school had been started.

Policy Issues in the Day-to-Day

Management of Schools

Ghana is signatory to various international conventions on the rights of PWDs. In line with these conventions, national policies have been designed for implementation in education. From the literature, the policies that guided the practice in SEN in the 2006/2007 academic years were few and not comprehensive enough to address the specific needs of schools. The picture that emerged was one of some efforts being made to institutionalise some local policies that drew on international initiatives as discussed above to meet local needs. The policies in place are discussed subsequently.

International Policy

The literature revealed a variety of international conventions guiding the field of disability in Ghana. Conventions and policies identified included the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (1982); Salamanca Declaration (1994); Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993); Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). The major international policy that played a prominent part in providing the base framework for SEN in Ghana was the Salamanca Declaration (1994).

The Salamanca Declaration uniquely articulated the rights of people with disabilities (PWDs) and the need for government and civil society to progressively explore avenues for the inclusion of PWDs in national life. Inclusion as a strategy was expected to reduce poverty and accelerate the pace of moving Ghana from a developing country status to a middle income one. The design of local SEN policies reflected the mandates of international

policies projected to accelerate development and the realisation of international and local conventions including the Education for All (EFA) mandate, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS).

National Policy

It emerged from the review of the official documentation on policies that guided the practice of SEN in the country that, Ghana prides itself as the first nation to ratify the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992). In response to the convention, the government enacted the Children's Act (Act 560) of which Section 10 sub-section 2 states that: "a disabled child has a right to special care, education and training wherever possible to develop his maximum potential and be self-reliant" (p.1).

Drawing on this Act, special schools were strengthened with more specialist trained teachers and teaching materials. However, the national implementation of the policy within the SEN field was proved to fall short in the provision of educational and training opportunities for PWDs. The extent to which this implementation was enacted was of concern to some people including practitioners and the disabled themselves.

Participants in all categories expressed the view that policies in operation were not comprehensive enough to address the specific needs of PWDs as compared to the same situation in other countries. In spite of all these policy efforts discussed, the needs of PWDs could still not be met as the needs as well as the worsening economic conditions in the country meant very little financing of the education sector and ultimately, the SEN sector.

In 2000, Parliament enacted the National Policy on Disability in response to general public concern and international mandates. This policy was to facilitate an increased participation of PWDs in education and training programmes at all the levels of education as discussed in the Part 2 of this report. Again, the secondary data suggested there was a feeling that the mandates of this policy were inadequate in addressing the needs of PWDs. This gap in the policy led to an intense, persistent militancy by human rights groups, civil society groups and for the first time in Ghana, PWDs themselves for the promulgation of an act of parliament. The act was projected to be enforceable by law to address lapses associated with existing policies. The advocacy led to the promulgation of the National Disability Act (Act 751) of 2006. The act was enacted to expand on the existing rights of PWDs and ultimately, the scope of SEN practice. For instance, Article 17 of the Act states that:

The Minister of Education shall by Legislative Instrument designate in schools or institutions in each region which shall provide the necessary facilities and equipment that will enable persons with disability to fully benefit from the school or institution (p.1).

Specific rights and responsibilities were clearly spelt out in the new document. At the national level then, there was a law which mandated the Government of Ghana to provide for the educational and social needs of PWDs. However, as at the close of 2009, the government was yet to establish the legislative instrument that would operationalise the Act. To what extent

was the enactment of the law operating and influencing school management practices in study schools?

MOESS/GES Policy

As indicated in the literature review in Chapter 2, the Ministry of Education (MOESS) through the Ghana Education Service (GES) had responsibility for the provision of pre-tertiary education. The MOEYS Policy and Programme Document (2001) advocates, (among other things), for the mainstreaming of CWDs where possible as well as the provision of “adequate resources for special schools” (p.14).

On the positive side, the policy demanded the removal of all stigma against PWDs as well the removal of all barriers that confronted them. On the negative side, the policy fell shy of articulating specific strategies for the implementation of policies and activities that would operationalise the mandates in educational settings. An excerpt from a former official who was expounding on the complexities of working in this area without an official policy sums it all up:

Special education operates on an extension of the legislation of the general education system. There is no separate legislation governing the education of children with disabilities. It is expected that the special education division will interpret and implement general education policies with minimal modification...this does not clarify a clear-cut direction on policy, provision/placement, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of

special educational provisions (Casely-Hayford, 2002; p.13).

While this observation was expressed in 1998, as at the time of data collection, the government and the GES were yet to establish and implement any such policy.

It was worthy of note however, that in the late 1980s, the Special Division (SpEd) of the GES had designed an internal policy document to guide the practice of SEN. At the time of data collection and write-up stages, a more comprehensive policy that articulated specific responsibilities for specific groups to cater for SEN had been developed and was waiting ministerial approval to be adopted as the official policy. Since ministerial approval had not been given and there was the high possibility of amendments to the policy I could not comment and quote from it. The general feeling from participants was that the new policy will clarify muddy areas including an exact definition of “free education” to further enhance practice.

Reflecting the lack of a specific policy on SEN, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic education (GES, 1995) which was the major policy implementing framework for new initiatives in education at the time gave just a brief mention of SEN issues. As such, the strategic plan which was subsequently designed by the GES to implement the reforms did not assign any budgetary allocation specific to SEN. As at the time of data collection, the new strategic plan of the GES operating from 2010 to 2020 had expanded on SEN provisions. However, as had happened in previous strategic plans, no budget lines were allocated to the activities that were outlined for the SEN

sector. To what extent did the policy situation discussed above moderate activities in school management in study schools?

How Policies Moderate Day-to-Day Management

For stakeholders, the lack of a coherent policy that succinctly detailed avenues for their inclusion in school management was a source of concern both for themselves and the GES.

Policy Issues in the GES Terrain

For the GES, there was the recognition in the literature that the valuable contributions that could be harnessed from the inclusion of stakeholders in educational management were under-utilised at the moment. While the guidelines for the management of schools mandated the establishment and operation of a number of decision making bodies to help with school management, the implementation of the policy was challenged. The SMC, for example, was designed to include membership from the community and other allied organisations to promote a more democratic mode of school management.

The operation of the various organs described in the system to enable a broad based management model for use in schools had collapsed in most cases. Reflecting this incidence, it was interesting to note that both of the deaf adults that were interviewed declined to comment on school management, making statements that the questions were best answered by the SH: “The Head teacher should be the best person to answer this question” (SMG1). This inability to express an opinion on school management profoundly spoke of the lack of avenues for including alumni in school decision making.

Policy issues in the Community/Parents Terrain

The lack of a coherent policy apart from the Ministry of Education's Policy and Programme Document of 2001 for the parents group meant that they were involved in very few of the management structures that operated in the schools. Parents expressed ignorance on the avenues that should involve them in school management apart from the PTA. Of the two parents interviewed, one's response to a probe on their involvement in school decision-making was:

I am not a teacher...the school makes the decisions...though we get to make our opinion on some school matters known when we go for PTA (PTA1).

Another parent stated that:

I am afraid you will have to contact the Head as they are in charge of the school...though we sometimes express our opinions on some school affairs...especially where we have to pay some levies (PTA2).

For school management, the lack of an adequate policy made it problematic to coordinate efforts in meeting the individual needs of the child. Who was responsible for assessing and diagnosing the type and intensity of deafness for example, was a problem for SMCs. Unlike the practice in the UK, for instance, where a team from different service providers including the education and social welfare sectors met with families to draw up individual plans to address the needs of a disabled child, this did not happen in Ghana.

Addressing this challenge is hopefully featured in the new draft policy guidelines expected to be signed into law by the end of 2010.

The various official documents reviewed equally described the circumstances that portrayed the low level of parental and community involvement in school decision making. The general impressions were that the implementation of the decentralisation policy was challenged due to various reasons notably that of low levels of literacy and lack of awareness of the avenues in which parents and the community could be part of the school management system. This incidence validates the Phase 1 finding for parental involvement in decision-making where SHs repeatedly referred to parents as “*dumping*” their children in the schools. In the words of one expert on education:

we are yet to have the facility, yet to have
commitment of teachers and parents in providing the
necessary support for the children to do well
academically, socially for them to be accepted by all
(AC2).

For the two academics in SEN, by policy and in practice, Ghana had made great strides in improving educational provisions for CWDs. However, there was still a long way to go in meeting the practical dictates of international mandates for SEN.

Policy Issues in the NGO Terrain

The place for NGO or corporate bodies to be involved in school management is designed to follow the same pattern as that of parents. The cooperate world was part of the community and the various organs designed to

provide community involvement in school decision making provided a slot. At the time of the data collection, there were a number of international organisations supporting the schools with support of various types. From the data, these organs were influential in improving the conditions of the schools in a realisation of their pro-poor policies, bringing relief to meet the needs of people in need. In all schools, various structures including clinics, libraries, farming projects showed the active presence of NGOs in the lives of study schools. However, in spite of the huge capital outlays that were pumped into the schools these organisations were not directly involved in the day-to-day management of schools.

Boundary Issues in Day-to-Day School Management

This portion of my research report interrogates the boundary issues that occurred in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI. The obtained data from interviews, document reviews and observation address Research Question 7. To effect a comprehensive exploration of management issues, I opted for the use of an adaptation of the Herne's model (2004) in the physical, mental and psychological dimensions to explain boundary issues.

Schools, just like most organisation can be described as open systems, accepting resources from the environment, processing these resources and giving out some output in the formed of school products. As indicated in the literature review in Chapter 2, all systems have boundaries. The school's boundary can be described as that point which demarcates the school as a system from other systems. As a heuristic device, the boundary as a concept describes the point where members may be included or excluded from a system (Hernes, 2004; Jones, James & Dunning, 2004; Czander, 1993).

The literature points to the management of the boundary as key to the success of an organisation (Hernes, 2004; Jones, James & Dunning, 2004; Czander, 1993). The need to maintain the boundary has critical implications for inter- and intra-school/stakeholder interactions. For schools, an application of boundary theory to school management arguably suggests that membership of school decision making to guide the day-to-day management is a defined one.

Who was included or excluded from school decision making? To what extent were accepted members (stakeholders) involved in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI? These questions are answered with findings from the relationships that SMCs maintained with stakeholders. Boundary issues are identified in the physical, mental and social dimensions of the boundary model adapted from the Hernes (2004).

Physical Boundary Issues in Day-to-Day School Management

The physical dimension denotes the formal rules and physical structures regulating human activity in the group or organisation (Jones, James & Dunning, 2004). In this instance, what policies regulated the interaction that should occur between school management and stakeholders?

The Physical Boundary was variously defined by policy

From the official GES documentation analysed, school districts and SMCs were to integrate stakeholders in school management through varied bodies such as the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), School Management Committee (SMC), school-community support groups at the district level such as the District Education Planning Team (DEPT), District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC), School Performance Appraisal Meeting (SPAM) and

performance monitoring team (PMT) Meetings. The structures designed by the GES identified avenues to involve stakeholders in the management of schools, defining who should and should not be included in school management. In practice, how were these bodies operating in schools? Who may be invited to be part of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI?

The Physical Boundary was challenged with Implementation

Responding to questions to explore how the physical boundary was experienced, participants in the SMC group indicated that the physical boundary in school management was outlined in official documentation. Structures for involving stakeholders in school decision making existed. Operating the structures for inclusion in school decision making for improved day-to-day management of schools was another matter. SMCs in the main saw the parents/community stakeholder group as being alienated from the school. The recurring use of the metaphor “*dumping*” suggested that these stakeholders had voluntarily withdrawn from having links with their wards and as such the school. On the reverse, participants from the stakeholders group to a large extent expressed themselves in terms that suggested very little involvement in school decision making. All indicated their inability to express opinions on school management. The recurring comment was:

As for the day-to-day management you will have to ask the school heads...they can tell you what happens (SMC participants).

As for things like planning ... you will have to ask the school heads...they can tell you what happens (SMC participants).

For the NGO group, the response was: “We give support to some requests made to us...but we are not part of the planning process” (NGO1 and 2). For past students, the perception was: “The school head can explain better about things like planning... we are not involved” (SMG 1 and 2).

While I was anticipating that the management functions were the duty of school management, I was expecting inputs from stakeholders. Involvement especially at the planning and accountability of school management decision making processes that bodies like the SPAM were expected to promote was evidently not the experience in study schools.

Could the apparent lack of knowledge of stakeholders about the day-to-day management of schools imply that schools were not adhering to laid-down procedures for the inclusion in school decision making? Or was it possible that stakeholders were not willing to be involved in school decision making? This tension raises questions for further investigation in some subsequent research into the management of SMSSCHI.

Alternatively, projecting from the Phase 1 data, challenges school management faced in the execution of their duties could explain the distance from school management that participants indicated. For instance, though there was a relationship between the stakeholders and study schools, the lack of ICT facilities restricted smooth communication lines hence the physical boundary moderated the extent to which schools involved stakeholders in decision making.

The Physical Boundary was moderated by Location

Evidence from the data suggests that for the GES and local communities, the very location of schools away from mainstream settlements meant that

face-to-face interactions could not be a daily occurrence. The lack of opportunities for interaction projected an implication for the way stakeholders experienced the physical dimension of the boundary between themselves and school management. Inadequate telephone and internet facilities meant that schools had to adopt very slow processes to keep and maintain visibility in the community. This picture was vividly illustrated when after the Phase 1 data collection I wrote “thank-you” notes to all schools visited. Of the seven schools, only one received my letter and sent a response to it! As a result, it often became necessary for long journeys to be made to keep communication lines flowing. As indicated by one SH:

Periodically, I have to travel to Accra to meet with the Director, you know to discuss things ...sometimes when you need clarification on something and you want to talk to a colleague, we use our personal cell phones at our own expense (SH- Pear school).

The challenges of operating laid down procedures for involving stakeholders are discussed to a large extent in the Phase 1 report (refer to Chapter 5).

Mental Boundary Issues in Day-to-Day School Management

Mental boundaries described the ideas and central concepts held by parties within the system. Mental boundary issues were interrogated with the question; “how do SMCs and stakeholders perceive themselves and each other’s roles in carrying out the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI?”

Disability and the Mental Boundary

From the data, the nature of disability appeared to be experienced as a boundary. The distinctive nature of SEN and deafness for that matter continuously appeared in the speech of participants. As one SH put it:

One aim is to provide vocationally-based training for the deaf children because we know there are no opportunities for higher education for them (SH-Pineapple School).

Another said that: “Some parents are not serious. They just don’t see why they should be wasting money on the deaf child” (SH-Pear School). Stakeholders had their own opinions on the mental boundary. As one official put it:

When I identified children with disabilities, I take them to a special school because that is where they will get proper treatment and education. So where parents agreed, then all I did was to pay for their school fees, arrange transportation, arrange for parents to visit (NGO1).

To one academic in SEN:

The fact that research should go on to find out whether some of them (CHI) have learning disabilities even though descriptions will tell you that we should not count that against them and that is why I want to say that they have additional problems... but of course there are some brilliant ones amongst them. Societal

attitude is not positive, deaf people have to assert themselves for people to accept them (AC1).

When asked to comment on the nature and state of management of SMSSCHI, participants from the experts' group and NGOs were optimistic that the quality of educational provisions in SMSSCHI has improved and will continue to do so:

I don't know the actual performance to give statistics but this can be obtained from the various schools. If at national level, you can get the results... but last year some schools had 0% (percentage of BECE results) so what is it? It means there's something wrong (AC1).

If I have to make a statement, I will say it is (SEN) in a drift, trying to find its own identity ...there is a difficulty in the management of the schools. Heads and SMCs do not have any control over the teachers that they work with and other items are due mainly to the poor monitoring within the systems. District Directorates are not able to monitor what goes on in schools and this leads to people doing whatever they want (AC2).

Participants in the stakeholder group experienced the mental boundary of school management in another dimension. As reported earlier, the recurring answer from participants to questions on the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI was: "For things like planning ... you will have to ask the school heads...they can tell you what happens" (Stakeholders).

For the NGO group, the response was: “We give support to some requests made to us...but we are not part of the planning process” (NGO2). The alumni also intimated that: “The school head can explain better about things like planning... we are not involved” (SMG1).

Responding to how they (NGOs) monitored that resources given to schools were judiciously used, one NGO indicated that they had trained some teachers to oversee on-going projects on-site and thus serve as liaison officers between the schools and their outfits. However, this process existed outside the regular day-to-day management processes in the schools. Mental boundaries from the data were minimally experienced by stakeholders in contrast to laid-down procedures for their involvement in school management.

In reaction to a question on the usefulness of SEN education, all participants were of the view that children with disabilities (CWDs) had a better opportunity to succeed in life as a result of their schooling. Participants, however, could not provide any meaningful information on their involvement in school decision making beyond specific areas where collaboration occurred. From the perspective of stakeholders they did not have any part in the day-to-day management of the school.

Social Boundary Issues in Day-to-Day School Management

Social boundaries delineate the identity and social bonding that are expressed in a group or organisation. The data suggested that the social boundary between school management and stakeholders experienced mirrored the Ghanaian perception of the school. As a result of the high illiteracy rates in the country, especially in the rural areas, teachers are seen as the “experts” and

parents and community members often left school decision making to the school management.

The Social Boundary was mediated by the Physical Boundary

The picture of the invisibility of special schools in Ghanaian society is exemplified again in the lack of social bonding opportunities between the schools and stakeholders. Unlike situations in the mainstream where school buildings may serve as meeting places for churches and civil society groupings thus bringing the school close to local communities, the very boarding nature of special schools did not permit this.

Segregated boarding school provisions for SMSSCHI limited other opportunities for social interaction between CWDs who lived for nine to ten months away from the family and mainstream society. From the data, the most viable mode in which communities, and for that fact, parents were getting involved with schools was through the benevolence stakeholders showed to schools. Possibly in response to their social responsibility and possibly expressing the use of the medical and spiritual models, philanthropists and other benevolent societies periodically made donations to schools.

The social boundary then was also experienced to a very minimum extent by participants. Opportunities that facilitated interaction to bring about understanding and acceptance of disability and disability issues to facilitate its mainstreaming were limited. This showed a link with the physical boundary issues expressed in the location of schools limiting interaction between study schools and local communities. This observation will be explored with similar research findings to ascertain its veracity or otherwise in subsequent discussions elsewhere in this report.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the data which explored the policy arena for the practice of SEN and how boundary issues in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI were enacted between the schools and agencies within their environment.

Welfare provisions for PWDs in Ghana were regulated by international policies including the Salamanca Accord. Local policies, notably, the National Disability Bill (2006) moderated the conduct of disability affairs. This bill was enacted after a protracted legal battle with the government. The bill draws from international initiatives like the Salamanca Accord as a blueprint to moderate issues of disability nationwide. From the data, the enactment of this bill was yet to translate into a policy on education for PWDs. Some provisions were outlined in the Disability Bill on the responsibilities of state agencies to cater for the welfare of PWDs. However, there was the need for a clearly articulated policy that detailed the roles and responsibilities of government and its agencies as well as all relevant bodies such that the GES could offer an internationally comparable SEN to PWDS in Ghana. Participants and indeed the documents reviewed all indicated that the lack of a policy on SEN was hampering the smooth operation of activities.

The second line of inquiry was into the boundary issues that emerged in the day-to-day management of study schools. Data were organised around the physical, mental and social dimensions model of the boundary as designed by Hernes (2004) and extended by Jones, James & Dunning (2004).

Aggregating the evidence from the data, it emerged that the physical, mental and social boundaries that SMCs and stakeholders experienced were a

very weak one. The location of the schools on the outskirts of communities to a large extent limited opportunities for intimate interaction, leading to a situation where schools were virtually invisible in the communities. This reduced interaction mediated the dimensions of the physical, mental and social boundaries that participants experienced and subsequently reflected on the level of involvement between SMCs and stakeholders. For stakeholders, relationship with the school was reported as being cordial. However, expressions used by stakeholders and SMC and the analysis of documentation suggested a very limited involvement in the day-to-day management of schools in contrast to the laid down avenues for involvement.

The extent to which the boundary was experienced had implications for involving stakeholders in school management. For one thing, opportunities to achieve the mandates of the decentralisation policy of the government were tremendously reduced. Again, the benefits of a broad based management structure for school improvement cannot be overemphasized as the literature on school improvement proves. What were the implications of all the findings the data had revealed in this study? The next chapter presents a discussion of the findings interrogated with the literature.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Overview

The preceding chapter presented the findings for Phases 1 and 2 of this study. This current chapter discusses the findings, interrogating it with the literature. The discussion, sectioned in line with the research questions, interrogates the findings from Phases 1 and 2 of the study with the literature.

Research Question 1: What is the nature of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI in Ghana, as described by

POSDCoRB?

Participants were asked to express their views on the “what?”, “when”, “who?”, “why?” and “how?” of the planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting functions that made up the day-to-day management of schools.

Based on the findings for Phases 1 and 2, I was able to make conclusions on the status of management functions as examined with the POSDCoRB framework. All the seven management functions detailed in the analytical framework were noted to be homogenous in operations in study schools.

Planning

From the findings, the short and medium types of projections for each term were the main focus for activities that were considered during the designing of school plans. Strategic planning, a fundamental management process provides a framework for making decisions on how to allocate organisational resources, address challenges, while taking advantage of opportunities that emerge along the way was evident in two out of the seven schools for Phase 1. For Phase 2, one of the seven schools with a strategic plan was included in the three schools for in-depth study. The findings displayed some improvements in school infrastructure as a result of the implementation of the plan.

The reasons ascribed for the low use of strategic plans was relative to the experience of school management committees (SMCs) in recognising the benefits to be derived from the use of such plans. While all schools had designed their local mission and vision statements, participants generally did not display any understanding or commitment to the intended goals of the projections described in the statements. The expressions participants used in describing their inability to articulate plans in relation to their statements suggested a lack of awareness of the linkages between vision statements and school planning. Participants indicated with an overwhelming majority that the situation was the result of an under-developed training programme for SMCs. Again, in compliance with the directives from the GES, decision making was highly centralized within the District Education Directorates (DED) and schools did not enjoy the autonomy required by management to effectively

make local strategic planning to solve identified problems on-site. SMCs had to comply with the centralized plans that were distributed to them from DDEs.

The low use of strategic plans echoes a prevailing situation in the field of SEN. In the Casely-Hayford (2002) report on the situational analysis of special education (SEN) cited in earlier chapters, one of the findings was a lack of a strategic plan for the SpEd Division of the Ghana Education Service (GES). The report went on to make the recommendation for the appointment of a consultant to lead in the design of such a plan to meet the educational needs of people with disabilities (PWDs) in Ghana. This process could then be replicated in all special schools including SMSSCHI and help school management take a more proactive approach to removing the barriers that hindered the smooth operation of the teaching learning process in schools.

Participation in Planning

From the findings, decision-making as far as planning was concerned depicted a collaborative affair as all staff, both teaching and non-teaching in all study schools took part in the general planning of school activities. At the departmental level, staff members were encouraged to make projections for specific areas that they were in charge of within the school. These departmental projections were then submitted to the school management team who also endeavoured to include staff demands on the school's master plan for each particular term.

Pupil representation in school planning was missing. Pupils did not serve on any school committee. All participants could not advance any cogent explanation for this situation. This finding was in contrast to the literature. For instance, according to a national forum for teachers and lecturers in the UK

(Association of Teachers and Lecturers [ATL], 2008), critical benefits accrued to stakeholders notably pupils and indeed the whole school when children are encouraged to be part of school decision making. As such, children should be provided with opportunities for having a voice in the day-to-day running of the school. According to the association, opportunities for ensuring “pupil voice” could range from: “...inviting comments from pupils about particular issues to involving pupils in making decisions about school policies”. (p.2). Other opportunities could be provided in decision making about the acquisition and use of equipment and other resources, school rules, issues concerned with time tabling, school uniform and pastoral issues such as those connected with bullying and behaviour policies and practice.

From the findings, pupils were actively involved in pastoral duties, with older pupils assigned younger pupils to mentor; supervision of out of class activities like the cleaning of the school compound and in games. However, participants did not formally recognize this as part of the general management of the schools. The benefits to be derived from such an involvement included increased self-confidence and feelings of empowerment and a sense of responsibility. The ATL (2008) further suggested that student voice in school management could potentially lead to improved behaviour as well as improved learning when pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and that of others within the school environment. This involvement could be extended into the classroom, allowing pupils chances to develop projects that will reflect pupil interests and thus facilitate a greater engagement with the material presented in the classroom. Children could be encouraged to have a say in the “what” and “how” to learn in the classroom. While these benefits

have emanated from the findings of research in a developed world could these same benefits be realized in a developing world environment like Ghana where the culture of society demanded that a child should be seen and not heard?

It is very interesting to note that a group of social scientists undertook a research to identify how pupil voice was operationalised in school settings in Ghana (Pryor & Ampiah, 2003). Using a case-study approach the group selected some schools in a school district to carry out their investigations. One observation was that pupils were not involved in making decisions in the school even though arguably, they might possess very productive ideas on how the schooling process could be structured to help them make the most benefit from the school.

For parents, their involvement was limited to some planning activities through their representation on the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and School Management Committee (SMC). This involvement was more evident in relatively affluent environments where parents showed more openness and willingness to engage with school management in ensuring a smooth and effective school system for their children.

Communities are equally involved through the donation of lands and other resources to help run schools. The appointment of some local chiefs and prominent personalities on the SMC brings the school in contact with local communities. According to the Ministry of Education's Sector Preliminary Review Report of 2008, the current level of community involvement in school management was very low:

...one of the most cost-effective ways for the MOESS to realize huge gains in the efficiency of fund use is through strengthening accountability...from current practices in Ghana it appears relationships between parents, through their PTA, and head teachers/teachers is very weak (p.23).

This finding is consistent with the literature (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Casely-Hayford, 2002) and my initial assumptions on the status of funding within the sector.

Organizing/Directing/Coordinating

The findings on the “what” and “how” of organising, directing and coordinating indicated that authority was devolved to the staff who occupied positions as departmental and unit heads. Each school had academic units with departments structured along subject areas as well as pastoral and other support units in line with the general structure for school organization for basic schools in Ghana.

The committee system ensured staff participation in management decision making and through this strategy fostered united efforts from staff for the school to achieve set schools for the children that were within the walls of the school. Ownership of school plans was high though in some cases, assistant school heads indicated some level of dissatisfaction with their roles within school management. While staff participation in school decision making was an active adjunct of school management, students were hardly involved in any

decision making in study school. This was in neglect of very useful avenues for teaching leadership qualities and good citizenship.

Staffing

The staffing function displayed some interesting trends, details of which are discussed in the following sections.

Recruitment of Staff

The staffing situation as far as numbers were concerned according to the findings was considered adequate in response to the “how” of the staffing function. In all study schools there were enough teachers to fill all teaching vacancies. However, in some instances, the teaching vacancies were filled with untrained (pupil) teachers and trained teachers who were not specialists in SEN. The reasons advanced for the refusal of some trained and specialist teachers either refusing posting or abandoning their posts shortly after reporting to schools included a lack of essential basic amenities in schools’ localities and difficulties in teaching CHI.

This finding was not surprising as previous studies have identified this phenomenon. Casely- Hayford (2002) in her situational analysis of the state of special education in Ghana cited here in this research report for instance observes that:

Interviews with experts in the field suggest that most teachers do not want to teach special needs children but simply want the degree or diploma when they enter UCEW (p. 17).

Reporting on a similar study conducted by Dery in 1985, Casely-Hayford (2002) indicates from the study findings that of the 223 teachers trained at the

time of his study, 77 teachers of the deaf had resigned between 1965 and 1978. This finding supports Akyeampong's (2001) view that even though the problem of teacher attrition at basic level was quite high after teachers pursued diploma or degree courses, it was very severe within the special needs area.

Quality of Staff

Another area of concern for participants was the quality of teachers that were in the schools and how the lack of specially trained teachers for the hearing impaired was impacting on the quality of delivery to pupils. Pupils could make very little sense of lessons when teachers did not sign for them. This was largely due to the fact that deaf children could not harness the strengths of incidental learning that most children acquired and used from all sorts of media while growing up. Incidental learning has been described as some form of indirect/additional/unplanned learning within an informal or formal learning situation (Schneider, 2009).

An alternative explanation for incidental learning devised by the UNESCO (2005) is "random learning". According to the UNESCO; "random learning refers to unintentional learning occurring at any place, in everyday life" (UNESCO, 2005; p.4). Incidental learning has accounted for people learning concepts long before they are able to articulate anything in any language (Kerka, 2000).

Children with hearing impairment (CHI) were largely cut off from all knowledge that was acquired by children through everyday interaction with friends and family due to their inability to hear. Subsequently, vocabulary as well as concepts had to be specifically presented and taught before an application of any one particular concept could be done in the classroom.

Teachers who had formal training in the education of CHI were aware of this requirement and therefore tailored their teaching to cater for this. For the untrained, this situation presented a very daunting and exhaustive task and consequently, such teachers' output may not be up to par, impacting on the quality of classroom interactions for CHI. Issues concerned with the communication gap for CHI was a critical factor that determined the ability of CHI to make meaning of the curriculum to enable them progress from one stage of the education ladder to the next. Education has been recognised as a right and an enabling right. As compared to their hearing counterparts in Ghanaian schools, the ability of CHI to take advantage of higher education to harness the empowerment and emancipation education was at the very basic level. Indeed, the literature in assessing the provision of schools for CWD in the country, indicates that the bulk of basic school facilities available in SEN were for CHI (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Casely-Hayford, 2002). However, the representation of CHI in higher education as at the time of the study was very minimal when deafness was compared to other types of disabilities.

Continuing Professional Development

Participants indicated overwhelmingly that the ability of untrained teachers to deliver effective lessons to pupils was a matter of concern to school management. Efforts had been made to help ameliorate the associated problems of unqualified staff in SMSSCHI. School management in all study schools had instituted in-service training for staff without specialist training to help boost teacher confidence during classroom interactions. School management had designed on-site training programmes for the teaching of

sign language as a means of helping teachers have easier interaction sessions for their pupils and for pupils to make an enhanced meaning of educational materials.

Motivation and Retention of Staff

School management had put in structures at the local level to motivate staff. All study schools were doing their best within the constraints of the limited resources at their disposal to find means of motivating staff to achieve to the maximum. Strategies such as free meals, free housing and free bussing services had been put in place to motivate teachers.

On the national front, the Ghana Education Service (GES) through the Special Education Division (SpEd) had introduced national best teacher award to be competed for annually by teachers with the most outstanding and innovative performance in special schools. This strategy signalled the goodwill the GES had in response to the need to support teachers' need for motivation within the challenging field of special education. This finding validates the existing literature on mainstream settings (see for example MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Casely-Hayford, 2002).

Compliance to Work Rules and Ethics

Participants saw themselves as professionals and worked as such. The data indicated that most staff members displayed a high sense of purpose hence, school management had very little reason to adopt sanctioning tactics to get work done. A strong work ethic was evident in all schools studied. Professional behaviour was guided by the Code of Ethics developed by the

Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) the teachers' union for teachers who operated in the pre-tertiary educational sector.

The level of professionalism displayed in study schools contrasted the trend in mainstream settings. The picture is one of teacher absenteeism and lateness for schools located in non-commercial centres of the country (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007). There trend suggests that the specialist trained teacher for CHI had some passion for their job hence, the display of staff commitment on the job.

Reporting

Reporting, the management function of communicating the activities of the school took place internally and externally and displayed an interesting trend.

Who Does The School Report To?

The findings indicated that internally, reporting to staff was done through memos and circulars, school diaries and in face-to-face sessions during staff meetings. Students got reports through announcements at morning assembly meetings.

Externally, schools reported to stakeholders. For parents, reporting on school activities was facilitated through verbal reports at PTA meetings, letters and circulars. For the GES, reporting was done through memos, school reports, inspection reports as well as verbal reports. NGOs got information on relevant school activities through the reports from the school as well as from the trained teacher liaison officer who supervised projects on behalf of the NGO. Again, this display of the reporting function mimicked the trend in

mainstream settings (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007).

For the international community, reporting was facilitated more through some stakeholders putting up reports on their websites on some interactions they might have had with schools. Schools have as yet not included the use of new information technologies including the internet in its reporting structure. This practice made special schools more invisible to the international community than the bulk of mainstream schools in the country.

Budgeting

The “what?”, “when”, “who?”, “why?” and “how?” of the management function of budgeting was explored further in this section. All the management functions discussed previously are driven to a very large extent by the availability of resources which are financed and made available by the schools’ appropriations of funds from different sources.

The Budget Process

For the “what” of budgeting, the finding was one that indicated that all study schools appropriated the bulk of their funds from the Government of Ghana (GOG) calculated on a pre-designed formula where each pupil was assigned a particular sum of money known as the “capitation grant” per school term. Participants in the majority observed that these funds were inadequate to finance all school activities as the provision of specialised services needed in providing adequate educational of CHI was very high as compared to available funds. Funds were released from the GES in four tranches over four quarters to finance school activities during the school year. (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007).

External Support for the Budget

The findings indicated that school management faced extreme pressures in the execution of the budget due to the fact that budgetary allocations arrive late to the school coffers. Funding that came into schools from the government were considered inadequate to finance school activities. Some challenges identified in the data included the late disbursement of funds to the schools, the call for innovative management especially in feeding the pupils. SMCs therefore had to include innovative means of sourcing funding in cash and in kind from NGOs and other development partners. Casely-Hayford sums up this picture of the status of funding for special schools as:

One of the greatest impediments to the development and improvement of special needs education in Ghana has been the woefully inadequate funding earmarked for the sub-sector... According to the latest MTEF budget for MOE, the special needs sector receives less than 0.4% to run its entire programming (2002, pp.24-25)

Again, SMCs have to make extra effort to liaise with members and groups in the communities in which schools are located as a means of securing extra funds to finance some school activities.

Internal Generation of Funds

In response to the changing philosophy on the provision of special education in mainstream schools, funding from NGOs to special schools which are segregated was drying up. Development partners who in previous years appropriated funds from developed nations to finance some activities in

special schools in Ghana are now strapped for cash to continue this provision. In order to address any disturbance to the running of special schools in the country, one NGO which was the main development partner for five of the study schools had helped the schools to establish some income generation schemes. With the exception of one case, the data indicated that all study schools engaged in some income generation activity to raise extra funds which then went into the finance of extra-curricular activities. At the same time, these ventures served as avenues where pupils received work place skills for future employment. These findings again validated the findings of other studies on the education sector (MOESS 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Casely-Hayford 2002).

Participation in the Budgeting Process

School management to a large extent promoted staff participation in budgetary decision making by incorporating their requirements in departmental budgets which were then factored in the school budget. Staff members representing the various units in the school were encouraged to participate in budgetary decision making by submitting their projections for the ensuing year. Their projections are subsequently incorporated in the school's budget. School pupils are however excluded from these processes, a state of affairs which reflected the general Ghanaian culture of excluding children from decision making. This finding validates the findings from previous studies. (MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007).

Research Question 2: What are the organisational challenges in the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana?

From the findings, I observed a common trend in the exhibition of challenges that SMCs faced as they executed their functions in the day-to-day management of schools.

Inadequate Numbers of Teachers

One finding indicated that all teaching vacancies in the schools were filled. SMCs however expressed the concern that there was a dwindling number of specialist trained teachers in the schools. Some reasons that were advanced to account for this reducing numbers included the refusal of specialist teachers to accept posting to the special schools. Such remote areas where schools were located lacked basic and social amenities like good mainstream schools, hospitals, banks, amusement centres and markets that were considered necessary for a modern family.

Another reason for the low numbers of specialist teachers was attributed to the refusal of newly qualified teachers in choosing special schools. Such teachers may have experienced difficulties in teaching CHI during the training period when they were required to do a year-long attachment to a special school. After certification, such teachers may make a choice for the mainstream system where it was comparatively easier to achieve success in teaching hearing pupils. This finding validates the finding from the literature notably that of the Casely-Hayford (2002) study report which observes in part that:

Interviews with experts in the field suggest that
most teachers do not want to teach special needs

children but simply want the degree or diploma when they enter UCEW ([University College of Education, Winneba] (p. 17).

Findings from another study indicate that:

The problem of teacher attrition at basic level is quite high after teachers pursue diploma or degree courses but it is very severe within the special needs area (Acheampong, 2001).

Another reason that was advanced for the low representation of specially trained teachers in special schools was the uncooperative attitudes of District Directors of Education (DDEs) in posting teachers to the schools. Due to lack of understanding of the demands of SEN, the DDEs applied the same principle of pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) used in mainstream settings.

Teaching/Learning Materials (TLMs)

The acquisition of appropriate TLMs for use in the teaching processes posed a concern for SMCs. As has been discussed elsewhere in this report, CHI do not benefit from incidental learning and achieving abstraction was highly limited. For any one communication session during the teaching-learning process, every single concept had to be taught before the processing of information could be meaningfully done. To make the teaching of concepts meaningful, educational settings for CHI need to be rich in boldly illustrated teaching learning materials. The situation in schools portrayed a picture of poorly lit and bare walled classrooms and very few materials that could offer hands-on experience to aid children make meaning of text during the teaching learning processes in the school.

While teachers endeavoured to accumulate appropriate teaching learning materials to make lessons more tangible and meaningful, the Casely-Hayford (2002) report confirms the inattention that the field had received since its inception 50 years plus down the line. Assessing policies that guided the implementation of SEN in Ghana, the report indicated that the Ministry of Education's (MOE) policy at the time of her assessment offered very little acknowledgement to the sector. The policy advocated that:

No excessive financial burden should be placed on the government budget or on children and parents as a result of curriculum. Therefore certain educational needs must be foregone if they constitute an "excessive financial burden" (p.2).

To Casely-Hayford the lack of recognition has impacted the provision of appropriate and adequate teaching and learning experiences for the education of PWDs. The result in schools, ultimately, was relatively poor student outcomes. This incidence was reported on in 2002 and there was a recommendation that the government was going to include budget lines to cater for this provision in special schools. As at 2007 when the first crop of data for this study was harvested, school management were still bringing this up as a major constraint that was negatively impacting on school activities.

Parental Attitudes

Mirroring the general attitude of Ghanaians towards PWDs, one finding pointed to the low interest parents exhibited towards their children's education. In most cases, parents were reported as not showing much interest in the processes that went on in the schools. SHs expressed their

dissatisfaction with the way parents collaborated with the schools in the education of their children and the intriguing use of the word “*dump*” to describe how parents failed to interact with their children during term time was evident throughout the data. This finding was in contrast to the literature on effective schools around the world which attested to the benefits that accrued to the school and pupils when parents were actively encouraged to be part of the school system (see for instance, James & Connolly, 2000; Atakpa & Ankomah, 1998).

Accommodation for Teachers

A unique feature of study schools was that unlike the mainstream basic schools, all but one study schools were boarding institutions. As such there was the need for some teachers to be housed on school campuses to oversee the activities of the pupils during term time. All the schools did not have enough bungalows to house the required numbers of staff so supervision of pupil activities then fell on the untrained shoulders of housemothers.

Infrastructure

The provision of education within any school demanded the use of infrastructure like buildings and other facilities. All study schools had infrastructural challenges such as; libraries, laboratories, clinics, dormitories, offices and playgrounds. The findings note that at the time of the study, schools were looking for funding from other avenues apart from the government of Ghana (GOG) funding to finance their activities. All schools had some building projects going on and all were financed from various sources other than the assigned GOG funds. In three schools, district assemblies were actively involved in the provision of school infrastructure.

The picture of inadequate and unmaintained school infrastructure was a feature in a significant number of mainstream and special schools in Ghana.

The Casely Hayford (2002) report again noted that:

Visits to any of the special needs institutions in the country reveals the deplorable condition of buildings, lack of books for students and other endemic problems the entire sub system is experiencing due to lack of basic funding(p. 25).

The findings from the study confirmed the state of infrastructure in SEN schools as described by Casely-Hayford (2002).

Curriculum

Study schools were noted to offer the same curriculum as mainstream schools. All subjects with the exception of French as a foreign language and Ghanaian language were included on the school timetable. Children in most cases had difficulty assimilating the relevance of the material of the literature as most books were written about concepts which were culturally different from what pertained in the immediate surroundings of pupils.

Another problem associated with the curriculum was with adapting the curriculum to suit the educational needs of the children. Pupils could make very little sense of lessons when teachers did not sign for them. This was largely due to the fact that deaf children could not harness the strengths of incidental learning that most children acquired and used from all sorts of media while growing up. The data indicated that school management did not have the expertise or training to handle curriculum adaptation to aid pupil learning.

The picture of the curriculum in use in SMSSCHI was illustrated in the analysis by the Casely-Hayford (2002) study. The study report indicated that: “teaching and learning has not been effective for the majority of deaf children” (p.29). The reasons the Casely-Hayford study ascribed for this inefficiency was the lack of implementation of appropriate communication modes to meet the educational needs of CHI. There was a call from the study for the acceptance and recognition of a Ghanaian Sign Language (GSL) which would be unique to the country as against the American Sign Language (ASL) which was currently in use. Issues concerned with the communication gap for CHI was a critical factor that determined the ability of CHI to make meaning of the curriculum to enable them progress from one stage of the education level to the next. The ability of CHI to take advantage of higher education to harness the empowerment and emancipation education available to their hearing counterparts was at the very basic level. Indeed in assessing the provision of schools for children with disabilities (CWD) in the country, the bulk of pre-tertiary institutions for PWDs were for CHI. However the representation of CHI in higher education as at the time of the study was very minimal when deafness was compared to other types of disabilities.

Disability Assessment Procedures

The Disability Act of 2006 specifies that assessment centres should be set up in all regions to help in the early identification of disability for intervention. According to the Casely-Hayford (2002) report, as at the time of her study, there were nine assessment centres mostly located in the southern parts of the country. The report further indicated that these centres were under-resourced, struggling to carry out their duties with little equipment.

The Salamanca Declaration ratified by Ghana mandates mainstream educational provisions for PWDs. From my study findings, the lack of assessment centres in all regions was greatly hampering the realization of the inclusion policy. Casely-Hayford contends that the establishment of these centres would aid in the increased capacity for the integration of PWDs in the mainstream, helping to reduce the numbers of pupils seeking to enter segregated special schools. However, the low numbers of assessment centres as well as their location was impeding the effective provision of SEN in the country.

Pupil Outcomes

From the documents analysed, efforts in education were structured to meet some acceptable socially constructed pupil outcomes. Defining what these targets or outcomes are, have presented an on-going challenge for the education sector in Ghana. Pupil outcomes for schooling have remained a hotly debated concept across all the years and designing indicators for school outcomes is fraught with controversies. One tangible but disputed indicator is the performance in externally moderated end-of-schooling examination, in this case the basic education certificate examination (BECE). Oduro, Dachi, Fertig and Rarieya (2008), in a discussion on conceptualising quality of education, focused on indicators for assessing pupil outcomes. To them:

One of the indicators of quality schooling is students' scores on internationally, standardized or nationally comparable tests of achievement in knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes (p.13).

In collaboration with this finding the Casely-Hayford (2002) report noted that:

...the educational attainment of the Deaf has generally remained very low at the basic(primary) level due to the communication difficulties outlined...programmes for integrating the hearing impaired into basic schools have had to be suspended for lack of interpreters (p.20).

The general consensus from the data was that graduates of SMSSCHI usually were not able to move on to the second level of education (refer to Table 2, p.97). For the 2006/2007 academic year for instance, no pupil made the official grade of aggregate 24 for admission to senior secondary school. While this had never happened before, performance in the basic school leaving certificate (BECE) was noted to be discouraging over the years, a situation some people in the country unofficially dubbed “0% passes”.

Research Question 3: What is the state of the relationship between the SMSSCHI and local communities?

Parents of the children in SMSSCHI as a collective entity were perceived to be very distant from the school, showing a feeble interest in what went on in the school. They were also described as “*dumping*” their children in the schools. In more enlightened communities, some parents collaborated with SMCs through financial support and mobilizing support from parents and the larger community for schools. According to the Ministry of Education’s Preliminary Sector Review Report of 2008, the current level of community involvement in school management was very low:

...one of the most cost-effective ways for the MOESS to realize huge gains in the efficiency of fund use is through strengthening

accountability...current practices in Ghana appears to show that relationships between parents, through their PTA, and head teachers/teachers is very weak (p.23).

At the community level, relationships with District Assemblies to access support in the form of funding and other resources were problematic. District Assemblies, the statutory governmental body mandated to implement the decentralization policy of public administration was responsible for schools within its jurisdiction. Study schools were located to cater for children within a region and not a district. As a result, it was difficult for SMCs to obtain help from the Assemblies. This was a unique management dilemma that had been elicited from the data. Participants did talk about this extensively, giving the impression that it was time for the GES to further interrogate this phenomenon and strategise to bring all District Assemblies together into avenues for collaboration with schools to improve educational provisions for PWDs in the country.

Research Question 4: What is the nature of the relationship between SMSSCHI and the private sector?

From the data, NGOs were the major bodies that assisted the schools especially when it came to funding and technical support. The state of the interaction between schools and private sector as described in the data is confirmed by review report of the Ministry Of Education's Preliminary Sector Review Report of 2008. The report observes that: "Special Education Division...appears to rely on external partners to a great extent for both financial and technical support" (p.60). From the findings, the current relationship schools shared with NGOs was undergoing redefinition. It

emerged that the main NGOs supporting schools were in the process of withdrawing their funding. This situation has reflected the impact of their own finances being restructured to reflect their home countries' philosophy on SEN provisions. In conformity with the move towards mainstreaming, donor countries were no longer willing to support segregated schools hence the change in interaction processes. The MOESS (2008) observe that this will present special problems for the schools as GOG funds were not enough to finance all required activities of schools in the country.

Corporate bodies are yet to be involved in school management. Their presence is only minimally felt in a few schools through periodic donations of food and other resources. This situation is collaborated by the Casely-Hayford study. Among other things, the report indicated that:

There are very few agencies working in special needs education and no major donor support for special needs education in Ghana...there is a tremendous need to bring visibility to the sector and begin to formulate a strategic plan for sector wide funding and donor support (p.24).

The GES and stakeholders must strategise to improve on their efforts to mainstream disability issues in everyday life to increase. Such increased efforts will facilitate public awareness of SEN issues and thus promote public acceptance.

**Research Question 5: What is the nature of the relationships between
SMSSCHI and the GES?**

The findings indicated that the GES was an active partner in school management, maintaining its links with schools through reports from visits to schools by peripatetic teachers and circuit officers attached to the District Education Directorates (DEDs). These officers liaised with the school, communities and the DEDs. The visits were described as being too few in number and the collaboration problematic at times. The state of the interaction between schools and the DEDs is confirmed by the Ministry of Education's Preliminary Education Sector Performance Report of 2008. The report observed that accountability between DEDs and head teachers/teachers was also: "weak as DEDs lacked accurate information on their performance" (p.3). From the findings, cooperation between the schools and the DEDs was not close in five study schools as their geographical location posed a problem for interaction. All schools reported that they had very close relationships with the DEDs in their immediate localities.

**Research Question 6: What Educational Policies Influence The
Management Of SMSSCHI In Ghana?**

The practice of SEN in Ghana was moderated by various international, national and education sector policies. The detailed discussion of these policies is addressed in the following section.

International Policies

Ghana in implementing educational policy for SEN acknowledges the mandates enshrined within international policies. Some policies identified in the documentation reviewed included the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities (2006); Salamanca Declaration (1994); Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993); World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (1982). The major international policy that played a prominent part in providing the basic framework for SEN in Ghana was the Salamanca Declaration (1994). The Declaration uniquely articulated the rights of people with disabilities (PWDs) and the need for government and civil society to progressively explore avenues for the inclusion of PWDs in national life.

National Policies

At the national level, the translation of international mandates was displayed in the enactment of various policies over the years. From the promulgation of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992) Ghana promulgated the Children's Act (Act 560) to address the needs of all children in Ghana. In 2000, parliament in recognition of the shortfalls in the educational provisions for PWDs enacted the National Policy on Disability.

From the findings, practitioners experienced this new policy to be inadequate in meeting the needs of PWDs. A call from various sectors of the public went out to the government to enact a National Disability Act (see for example Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988). Such legislation would offer legislative backing to disability issues and compel the government to live up to its responsibilities in providing opportunities for PWDs to live an independent and mainstreamed life. Participants indicated that various governments dragged their feet on processing the legislation and in 2004/2005 there was a sustained and vigorous activism from civil society and PWDs. The continued activism

resulted in the promulgation of the National Disability Act (Act 751) of 2006. Four years down the line, the Legislative Instrument mandated by the act to set it into operation was yet to be enacted. This finding on SEN policy is evident in other studies (see for example Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Avoke, 2002; Casely-Hayford, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988).

MOESS/GES Policies

The GES which is the part of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOESS) is responsible for the provision and management of SEN through the Division of Special Education (SpEd) as part of the basic education system in Ghana. From the time of the inception of SEN in the country, the division has been operating its programmes on an extension of the general education policy. The lack of a specific policy on SEN has presented continuing challenges to practitioners over the years. Asamani in 1996 undertook a research in special schools across the country to assess the level of teachers' awareness on an SEN policy and how it was moderated in the SEN sector. She found out that 87% of her participants had no knowledge of any such policy and did not have any procedures to cater for the needs of children with disabilities in their classrooms. She concluded in her thesis in 2000 with a call on policy makers to expedite the enactment of an SEN policy to guide practice.

From the findings, it emerged that in 2001, drawing from the National Policy on Disability; the SpEd designed the Policy and Programme Document of 2001 to guide the conduct of SEN practices. However, the provisions of the Policy were noted to be lacking in a succinct description of relevant issues. This 2001 document has been the major policy in use until 2008 when a new policy design phase was set in motion, a process that was still on the drawing board by

the time of my study. Dilating on this issue in her report on a situational analysis of SEN in Ghana, Casely-Hayford (2002) made a similar observation, indicating that:

The Special Needs Division has articulated in many of its documents the need for clearer legislation/guidance on special needs education to give direction on the policy, implementation and forms of parental support (p.11).

This observation on the lack of a coherent policy to guide the practice of SEN is further validated by other studies (MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002).

Research Question 7: What are the boundary issues in the day-to-day management of SSMCHI in Ghana?

The boundary theory talks about the points where organizations demarcate as the borders beyond which non-members may be included or excluded from proceedings within it. For the purposes of describing relationships between SMSSCHI and stakeholders in the day-to-day management of study schools, boundary issues were observed in the physical, mental and social boundaries.

Physical Boundary Issues in Day-to-Day School Management

From the findings, the boundary like other boundaries was designated through a formal policy which provided specific avenues for school management to involve stakeholders in school management. The policy outlined the regulations on who should be included in school decision making, portraying the physical boundary. This GES policy clearly details the stakeholders within the school and the community who should come together to form the school management committee. The findings from the literature search suggest that this involvement was to be achieved through school-based

bodies like the school management committee (SMC), Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and district-level committees including the District Education Planning Team (DEPT), District Education Oversight Committee (DEOC), School Performance Appraisal Meeting (SPAM) and performance monitoring team (PMT) Meetings. All these bodies were to provide oversight of schools in an educational district (MOESS, 2008; MOE, 2002). The various bodies were instituted to promote community participation and involvement in school decision-making. Such involvement was to enhance community ownership of schools.

In reality, the findings revealed that the representation of stakeholders in actual school decision making was narrower than the definition in the policy. This expression of the physical boundary was experienced at about the same levels by SMCs and stakeholders. From the documentary and interview data, participants in the majority articulated a limited presence of stakeholders in school management. Avenues defined by policy for involving stakeholders in the day-to-day school management were not functioning at their optimum levels. Schools were losing the benefits of a broad based management team to improve on school decisions and ultimately quality of educational outcomes. While SMCs talked of parents and communities not showing any interest in what went on in schools, stakeholders indicated that they had no role to play in day-to-day school management.

The literature points to the management of the boundary as key to the success of an organisation (Hernes, 2004; Jones, James & Dunning, 2004; Czander, 1993). The need to maintain the boundary had critical implications for inter- and intra-school/stakeholder interactions. For schools, an application

of boundary theory to school management arguably suggested that membership of school decision making to guide the day-to-day school management was of critical importance for better management decisions.

On one hand, this finding was in line with findings from other studies conducted in mainstream basic school settings in Ghana (see for example MOESS, 2008). On the other hand, the findings were in contrast to the literature on effective schools around the world which attested to the benefits that accrued to the school and pupils when parents and other stakeholders were actively encouraged to be part of the school system (see for instance; Cheung, Lam & Ngai, 2008; Epstein, 2001; Atakpa & Ankomah, 1998).

Some challenges with involvement were identified to explain the state of the relationship levels. One reason for the low interaction between schools and stakeholders was ascribed to the location of the schools. All study school sites were located on the outskirts of the townships where schools were sited. Stakeholders in the most had limited opportunities to readily access schools as some children came from far distances to be enrolled in school. SMCs talked of the reluctance of parents to attend school meetings and identified distance to be a major reason that accounted for stakeholder behaviour.

In a related explanation for the physical boundary, study schools were noted to be boarding institutions which demanded that pupils be away from their localities for long periods of time. The general populace did not get the chance to see the children in everyday life as happens with children from mainstream schools contributing to the invisibility of study schools.

Mainstream school settings were in most cases located in the heart of settlements in the Ghanaian community. Community members may use the

schools' facilities for community meetings and school parks for other functions. The use of school facilities brought the schools and communities together and in most cases, intimate interaction ensued. For study schools, their boarding status and distances from mainstream societies denied such opportunities for interaction, contributing to their invisibility in society.

The findings for the display of the physical boundary contrast the description of school-community relations in mainstream settings (see for example, MOESS, 2008; Avoke, 2002). From this discussion, the physical boundary was accessed to be moderated by distance and boarding status of the school.

Mental Boundary Issues in Day-to-Day School Management

Mental boundaries described the ideas and central concepts held by parties within the system. Mental boundary issues were interrogated with the question; how do SMCs and stakeholders perceive themselves and each other's roles in carrying out the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI? From the findings, disability was experienced as a boundary. The distinctive nature of SEN and deafness for that matter continuously appeared in the speech of participants. Disability and the way it was perceived in the Ghanaian society greatly moderated the acceptance and operation of educational provisions for CHI. This perception was evident in the unwillingness of some teachers to accept posting to special schools as a result of the perceived difficulties associated with teaching the deaf. Additionally, the reluctance of some District Directors of Education (DDEs) to involve special schools in district-wide activities was another facet of the display of the mental boundary in the management of SMSSCHI.

The recurrent use of the word “*dump*” by the SMC participants to describe parental neglect of children during term time all pointed to the mental boundary. This observation from the findings is validated by the research findings by Agbeyenga (2002) who found out that the negative labelling attached to disability by Ghanaians translated into how readily people were willing to engage with PWDs. Other study findings make the same observation (see for instance; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Avoke 2002; Casely-Hayford 2002; Anson-Yevu 1988).

Arguably, school management and stakeholders will have to critically assess the negativism attached to disability and its impact on devolved school decision making. From the outcomes of this examination, SMCs could identify innovative strategies to promote a more intimate relationship between schools and stakeholders in order to harness the benefits of stakeholder involvement in school decision making.

Social Boundary Issues in Day-to-Day School Management

The social boundary of school management was experienced in the identities and social bonding that existed between schools and stakeholders in the environment. The evidence from the findings indicated that the social boundary was articulated to reflect the Ghanaian perception of the school. As a result of the high illiteracy rates in the country, especially in the rural areas, teachers are deemed to be the “experts” in the handling of the needs of the pupils. As such parents and community members did not express much interest to engage with schools. Findings from a study by Care International (2003), cited by the Educational Sector Performance Review (2008) on the state of school provisions indicated that; “poor communities felt

disempowered and helpless” (p.68). Local communities were reported as being reticent and reluctant to raise issues concerning school processes because of the fear that their interference may affect future educational and teacher supplies to their communities. For study schools, the situation presented added difficulties emanating from the distances between schools and local communities and the negative perception of disability. The social boundary was therefore moderated by the physical and mental boundaries.

Drawing the Findings for Phase 1 and Phase 2 Together

This study was designed to explore the day-to-day management of study schools over one academic year. As a result of a lack of previous studies in the research aims, I undertook an exploration of management issues in majority of the schools during the first wave of data collection. The major data sources were the practitioners in school management and documentation during Phase 1.

The evidence that emerged from the Phase 1 process indicated that all of the seven management functions described with the POSDCoRB framework were in operation in the schools. To a large extent, there was homogeneity in how these functions were being executed in the school. Planning; the main function that propelled the other functions was greatly based on a centralized system with the GES through the District Education Directorates (DED) exercising strong control of its design and execution in schools. SMCs were in place, managing the schools with the implementation of district plans that are generated by the DED in which schools are located.

Areas that deviated from the norm were noticed in the minimal use of strategic plans to facilitate a systematic approach to problem solution. The

many challenges that bedeviled school management in Ghana had added challenges for SMSSCHI as the requirements of providing SEN presented differing demands to that of mainstream settings. Funding for school activities demanded the design and implementation of proactive strategies to harness funding from stakeholders in the community. The low use of strategic plans therefore suggests that schools are slow in redressing the local challenges of school management. Again, the situation portrays the low level of managerial training that school heads possessed in study schools pointing to the need for further training for those at post and the establishment of preparation programmes for future heads.

The non-representation of pupils in school decision making in study schools was in contrast to the designated practice outlined in the literature. The non-representation of pupils suggests the reluctance of the SMCs to engage with students in school decision making. While this reluctance is typical of the prevailing situation in mainstream settings, the policies of the GES insists that SMCs should provide a voice for pupils in school management. One reason for this picture was gleaned from the expressions by some participants suggesting that the pupils they were engaging with could not operate on a higher level. Is this the real situation or was it possible for pupils to be engaged in school management if some innovative strategies were implemented? These questions point to the need for further research to interrogate this student representation profile.

The relationships between SMSSCHI and stakeholders were examined in the second section of data collection. The GES which was the authorising agent was found to be the agent with the most influence on what went into the day-to-

day management of the schools. Parents and communities were found to be involved on the periphery of the school decision making. The PTA and SMC were the only avenues that schools utilized to involve them. SMCs in the majority suggested that parents did not show much enthusiasm to be involved in the management processes in the schools. The relationship between schools and the private sector was found to be very minimal from the data. The private sector was represented by the work of NGOs in special schools. It was found that corporate bodies did not have any established relationships with schools. Periodically, some corporate bodies made donations to schools as part of their social responsibility.

The evidence from the Phase 1 findings provided “emic” evidence to obtain evidence largely through interviews to describe the enactment of the day-to-day management of schools. Whilst the information was useful and could illuminate my understanding of the nature of the management of SMSSCHI, I desired to go a step further.

My thoughts for Phase 2 were influenced by the view that it was possible to deepen the information on the day-to-day management of study schools. With the understandings of the school management profile from the Phase 1 data, Phase 2 brought in the voices of some stakeholders to explain the current status of the management of SMSSCHI. The application of the boundary theory helped to explain how the relationship between SMCs and stakeholders was exhibited.

Through the adoption of a longer period of observation and the introduction of the voices of stakeholders as identified in the literature, I extended the evidence from the Phase 1 data. The evidence from the Phase 2 data was

described in line with emerging issues in the performance of the management functions described with the POSDCoRB framework.

For the most part, the evidence for Phase 2 replicated the trends in the Phase 1 data. I further probed intervening factors concerning the practice of school management in the policies that guided the practice of SEN. Findings on policies focused on the international, national and sector policies that guide SEN practice. I realized that while there was a rich documentary evidence on mandates to promote educational provisions for PWDs, in practice the educational sector was challenged in carrying out their duties as a result of a lack of a specific policy on SEN. Efforts were far advanced in the enactment of a new SEN policy as the education sector at the time of the study write-up was awaiting ministerial approval.

The third and final group of findings focused on the boundary issues in the day-to-day management of schools. The findings indicated that the boundary was defined in the regulations on who should be involved in school decision making through the decentralisation policy of the GES. Boundary issues were identified in the physical, mental and social modes outlined in the boundary theory developed by Hernes (2004). Findings that emerged from the nature of the relationships that existed between SMSSCHI and stakeholders in the day-to-day management of study schools were explained with the boundary theory.

The physical boundary between schools and stakeholders as defined by policy was experienced differently from the policy defined practice. The representation of interests in school decision making to promote stakeholder participation in decision making is that the policy projects are not reflected in practice. Of the various management bodies instituted, The SMC and the PTA

were the two bodies that had some modicum of constancy in operation. Even here there were challenges associated with the collaboration processes that were available. While it was desirable for stakeholders to have a voice in the day-to-day school decision making, current practices were not facilitating this policy intention. The inconsistency between policy intention and policy implementation suggests that the SMC which serves as the governing lacks the relevant strategies for doing so. This finding then has implications for the preparation and training of SMC members to enable them carry out this function and thus improve on school management and subsequently school outcomes.

The mental boundary was experienced in the conceptualizations and ideas that were held by the members of a group. In the conceptualisation of disability, the mental boundary moderated the extent to which both stakeholders and SMCs were willing to engage with each other. The nature of disability meant that children had to be educated in a secluded boarding environment which was unlike the usual day school option for hearing children. The enactment of the day-to-day school management in its current mode portrayed the reluctance of society to place issues of disability in mainstream life and address the demands of the sector as such.

The social boundary was experienced in the shared ideas between the school and stakeholders. The SMC indicated in the main that a significant factor that moderated the level of parental involvement with school management was the location of the schools. As in all cases the study schools were located on the outskirts of their localities where opportunities for interaction were limited. Again, because schools were boarding, local communities could not use their

facilities for other community meetings as happens with mainstream school buildings. The social boundary was therefore mediated by the physical boundary.

The interplay of the physical, mental and social boundaries when applied to explain the relationships that SMCs shared with stakeholders points to the need for boundary spanning strategies that will bring the school and community together in order to harness the benefits that a devolved school decision making could do to have improved school services and the realisation of educational outcomes.

The Phase1 and Phase 2 finding drawn together brings me to the realisation that to a large extent study schools managed school activities with identical management strategies adopted in mainstream settings. This understanding brings up further questions for my quest to understand the management of SEN in the country.

While the literature reiterates the difficulties in directly linking management activities to pupil outcomes, was it possible to apply some indicators from the school improvement and school effectiveness research traditions to isolate the indicators that will explain the extent to which the current school management practices was contributing to pupil outcomes? Was it possible that an identification of boundary management strategies including boundary spanning strategies could help improve on the involvement of stakeholders in school decision making to help the realisation of the decentralisation policy of the GES? What were the differences in the educational demands of SEN and mainstream settings? Are there additional or exceptional demands that require other management techniques from the current

management practices in schools? Could the application of other management analysis models explain the current status of management in SMSSCHI? All these questions could be investigated from the platform of the mapping out of the status of school management of SMSSCHI facilitated from the findings of the current study. Implications of the study findings for practice and further research are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER NINE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This final part of the study report brings closure to my profiling of the day-to-day management of state maintained special schools for children with hearing impairment (SMSSCHI) in Ghana and its implications for the quality of educating CHI access. In this concluding chapter, the discussion focuses on a summary of major findings, the contribution of the thesis, an evaluation of the methodology used and finally a conclusion, and implications for practice and future research in Ghana. The chapter consists of five sections: (1) summary of study findings (2) implications of the findings for practice and further research; (3) theoretical contributions; (4) methodological evaluation and (5) conclusion.

Summary of Study Findings

The study explored the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI and generated some findings. The following section presents a summary of the major findings.

The Nature of the Day-To-Day Management in SMSSCHI

The evidence from the study pointed to an active performance of all management functions as explained by the POSDCoRB framework in schools.

In all cases, the enactment of management functions was relatively homogenous across study schools. There was a common structure for school organization and management in all study schools. Basically, this was a result of the centralized planning and monitoring of school activities by the district directorates of education of the Ghana Education Service (GES) to ensure conformity to set policies within the Ghanaian school system. Findings that emerged from the study to a very large extent validated the findings of other nation-wide studies on education. These findings largely mirrored findings from the Casely-Hayford study on the state of special education needs (SEN) across the country as at 2002 that in part provided the impetus for my research direction.

One other study objective queried the organisational challenges in the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana. The various country reports reviewed indicated some challenges that school management committees (SMCs) faced in mainstream school settings. The findings indicate that just like mainstream settings, SEN settings SMCs were confronted with similar management challenges in the practice of school management. These challenges reflected the general trend of problems that occurred within the basic school sector in the country as described in the literature (Casely-Hayford, 2002; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; MOESS, 2008). Beyond the general trends in mainstream settings, SEN settings experienced extra challenges as a result of many reasons. For instance, challenges connected to the management of boarding facilities and its attendant problems placed a unique toll on the management skills of SMCs in SEN settings, far beyond the scope of SMCs in mainstream settings.

The Nature of the Relationship between SMSSCHI and Stakeholders

Understanding the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI was further explored in the nature of the relationships between the SMCs and stakeholders. Findings are discussed in the next section.

Relationship between SMSSCHI and Parents/Local Communities

The data on the relationship SMCs shared with local communities displayed a trend of moderate involvement of communities in school management in enlightened and wealthy communities to one of very low involvement in poor communities. While communities in enlightened areas partnered schools especially in the area of financial support, rural communities displayed a distancing from schools. In such communities, there was the recurring use of the word “*dump*” to describe the way parents and guardians failed to interact with their wards during term time. This state of affairs reflected the literature on the Ghanaian attitude towards people with disability (Agbenyega, 2002; Avoke, 2002; Ocloo, 2001; Anson-Yevu, 1988).

From the literature, the disabled child, especially one that was deaf, was considered a curse and a burden on the family. Most families failed to educate the CHI as they were not recognized to offer any future economic returns to the family as in most cases, such children do not participate in the world of work. Most parents therefore preferred to spend their inadequate resources on their hearing children (Agbenyega, 2002; Avoke, 2002).

Evidence from the study pointed to very limited avenues for involving the communities from which schools received their pupils in school management. Such avenues identified were indicated to be a representation of opinion leaders on school management committees (SMCs) and sometimes benevolent

societies making donations to support schools. It was noted that communities in most cases donated the lands on which schools were located. SMCs were making some efforts to reach out to the communities in various ways. Findings describing the interaction between SMC and stakeholders pointed more to efforts to create of awareness in the populace on the causes of deafness and the need to support schools than a way of bringing the communities closer for involvement in school management.

For parents who are considered part of the community, avenues for involvement were not many. Unlike the situation described in official reports where the desired modes for school management was for a close collaboration between SMCs and parents, the parent teacher association (PTA) was the popular choice of opportunities to link up school management with parents. This trend validated the findings of previous studies in the country (Avoke, 2002; Anson-Yevu, 1988). In contrast, the literature from other settings described many more ways other than the PTA and SMC for involving parents in school management such as volunteering as classroom assistants (Epstein, 2001; Cheung, Lam & Ngai, 2008).

The Relationship between SMCs and NGOs

Concerning the nature of the relationships between the private sector and SMSSCHI, contrary to my expectation, the pattern that emerged from the study was a link with some NGOs with pro-poor mandates and very little contact with cooperate bodies. Such NGO bodies that enjoyed relationships with study schools partnered with them in the provision of funds for building projects and other technical support. NGOs were involved on the periphery of school management; making some inputs

through the practice of training one teacher to be the liaison between the school and the NGO. Such personnel were given training to manage ongoing projects on their school compounds, supervising contractors and keeping track of expenditures and generally reporting to the NGO. This trend again concurred with research findings from other studies in the educational sector (see for instance; MOESS, 2008; Akyeampong, Djangmah, Oduro, Seidu & Hunt, 2007; Casely-Hayford, 2002).

Relationship between SMSSCHI and GES

The GES was the most involved stakeholder in the management of SMSSCHI. As the authorising agent, the GES exercised oversight responsibilities for schools through the District Director of Education.

Through the work of the Special Education Needs Officer (SENCO) and the Circuit Supervisor, the District Education Directorate (DED) maintained relations with study schools. It was the work of the SENCO to identify children with disabilities within a particular district and place them in the special schools. Again, the SENCO investigated any curriculum challenges and sought appropriate help for teachers. The Circuit Officer went round the different circuits within a district and supervised teaching-learning activities.

The DED maintained management standards for schools within its jurisdiction with a centralized school calendar. Schools then worked around this plan and inserted some local plans. This trend was flagged up as a limiting challenge when planning for school activities to meet local demands. This trend was not surprising as study schools were established and operated by the GES.

Methodological Evaluation

I opted to study the day-to-day management of state maintained special schools for children with hearing impairment (SMSSCHI) with qualitative methods, employing a multi-site case study approach. Data collection was conducted in two phases to allow the collection of information over an academic year. Of the 12 SMSSCHI in Ghana, seven were accessed during Phase 1 for interaction and three for Phase 2. The study schools were purposively and theoretically included in the study. From within the schools, school heads (SHs), assistant school heads (ASHs), and heads of department (HODs) were sampled. In addition, two school management committee chairpersons (SMCCs) and seven special education needs teachers (SENCOs) were involved in Phase 1. The voices of stakeholders were brought into the study in Phase 2 with two parents, two academics in special education needs (SEN), two alumni and two non-governmental (NGO) officials invited to join the pool of participants, making a total of 38 participants.

Data collection was facilitated with semi-structured interviews, structured observation and document search. Interviews were tape-recorded with participant accent for later verbatim transcription. Some school scenes were captured in photographs during the observation processes. My impressions and other interesting events were recorded via dairies and short notes.

The POSDCoRB framework was very useful in describing the day-to-day management of schools as it helped me to illustrate what constituted the functions of the management process in schools. To compensate for the inability of the framework to capture human relations, the boundary theory was applied to establish how the boundary between SMCs and stakeholders

was experienced. The modified Hernes' model was very useful in locating the various areas in which the boundary was experienced. Applied within the arena of the qualitative research approach, I was able to get close to the enactment of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI and describe its lived nature. The application of the two theories proved to be very useful in making meaning of school management activities.

Implications of Findings for Practice

The study findings have implications for the provision of education for children with disabilities (CWDs). Some of such implications are discussed next.

Advocacy for the Enactment of Required Legislation

One challenge that hampered the day-to-day management of study schools was the lack of a specific SEN policy. While the evidence from the data indicated that the Special Education Division (SpEd) of the GES had designed a comprehensive policy to moderate the educational provisions for PWDs, this document is still awaiting legislation. In a related scenario, the Disability Bill of 2006 mandated the Minister of Education to promulgate a Legislative Instrument to operationalise the law. Four years after this bill was passed into law, the legislative instrument is still on the drawing board. Civil society and people with disabilities (PWDs) need to step up advocacy to lobby the government to have the required legislation promulgated to enhance the current provisions in SEN.

Preparation and Training of School Management Teams

The nature of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI as explored was commendable in the light of the challenges identified in the study. However,

some other strategies could be put in place to improve on the current situation. There was the need for the Ghana Education Service (GES) to build on the current practice of appointing staff with long service into the position of school heads by recognizing the need for formal preparation for educational management. It is recommended that the GES should be give school management committee (SMCs) more training on effective and innovative means for approaching school management.

For the planning concerns observed in the study, SMCs need training in the design and use of strategic plans to organize school management. Again, it will be necessary for SMCs to be trained on the need and benefits of involving pupils and stakeholders in school management to facilitate the effective implementation of the policy defined avenues to involve stakeholders in school decision-making.

Giving the requirements for the rehabilitation of the disabled and their relationships to educational provision, there was a critical need to improve on the current level of stakeholder involvement in school management. Boundary management skills and effective strategies to increase current levels of stakeholder involvement in school decision-making were imperative for the realization of the decentralization policy of the GES.

Mainstreaming of Disability Issues

The incidence of disability in The Ghanaian society was a reality and it was time for society in general and the Ministry of Education and the GES to reinforce current efforts in creating awareness of disability issues in relation to the many international conventions and policies the country has recognized. Such sensitisation will hopefully reduce stigmatisation and acceptance of

PWDs and disability issues such that the necessary attention and focus can be assigned to it in daily discourse and national policy design and implementation.

There were SENCOs in the various district directorates of education, however, there was the need to attract more qualified staff into the field such that the current numbers could be increased to enhance the services provided for CWDs. The special education components of the teacher training programme must be strengthened to increase the acceptance of disability issues in society as teachers have been recognized as a powerful tool for change in society.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study lays the basis for a deeper understanding of the management of educational provisions in special school settings for children with disability. Further research is required to extend that understanding and its implications for policy and practice. Following the evidence from the findings some observations for further research to guide the practice of SEN in Ghana are presented next:

1. This study has focused on the profiling of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI to serve as an entry point for further research in SEN settings to improve on educational provisions for PWDs. It will be useful to study the effects of leadership strategies that SMCs employed in the day-to-day management on educational outcomes for CHI. The emerging data could then explain why children who have graduated from the schools sometimes go back to schools looking for company. Such data could equally explain the current low representation of

graduates from the special schools in further education and the world of work;

2. The literature search pointed to a paucity of research on the SEN setting as a system. It was very interesting to chance upon a specially designed instrument which the GES utilized to gain data on school performance over a period of time. Based on the data obtained with this instrument, the GES produced the annual performance report for the basic education system for a particular year. The instrument when examined proved to have some very interesting points for analysis purposes that could be very helpful for the assessment of the school as a system and subsequent planning to ultimately improve on school management. It would be very useful for policy makers and practitioners if data concerning the SEN sector could be extracted from the annual data collected by the GES and analysed to provide a profile of special schools. Such profile data could bring out the unique features of SEN settings and give room for the design and implementation of specific management strategies to meet the unique educational needs of PWDs. PWDs could then benefit from the on-going efforts of government to provide quality education to the youth to accelerate the development of the nation.
3. Another interesting follow-on study would be a comparative study of the day-to-day management of educational provisions for CHI in Ghana and other countries like the U.K. Any good practices that are identified through such an exercise could be harnessed to improve the quality of educational provisions currently available for CHI.

Final Reflections

As I reach the end of my exploration into the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI, I conclude that the journey has been an emotionally draining and a physically taxing experience. From the previous encounter with the field of SEN during my initial teacher training days, I was aware that SMSSCHI were challenged in the quality of educational provisions available in the country. I understood that little sector-wide research captured the unique situations in such schools but I was not prepared for the attitudes of teachers, education managers, stakeholders and the Ghanaian community as a whole towards the educational provisions that PWDs accessed.

It was frustrating to discover that 50 years after the people of Ghana recognised the need to make education available for PWDs, there were still very lackadaisical attitudes towards disability issues. I found it amazing that the field of SEN had received very little support in terms of funding and general societal goodwill. While there were loud cries for the democratic rights of citizens to participate in public life, PWDs were recognized as just an emerging minority and their needs relegated to the background. The lack of an SEN policy to guide the practice in the field was of particular concern as the country passionately pursued an early achievement of the MDGs through social programmes like the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategies (GPRS).

The thrust of this study for me has been the consolation in the fact that my research has provided space for some unique aspects of SEN provisions within school management literature to emerge. The voices of practitioners and stakeholders in the field have brought to the fore the need for educational management at all levels including school management committees (SMCs),

to build rapport with stakeholders. Such partnerships could potentially improve educational provisions for PWDs and thus bring them on board in the country's quest to climb out of poverty and achieve national development.

Conclusion

This study has uncovered some of the issues exhibited in the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI in Ghana and its possible relationship to the poor representation of its school graduates in further education and the world of work. In addition, the study has identified potential avenues through which SMCs could partner with stakeholders to improve on school decision making and acceptance of PWDs in society.

From the findings, the challenges that moderate the practice of the day-to-day management of SMSSCHI presented a multi-faceted picture that demanded the concerted efforts of all in society to ameliorate limiting effects. The acceptance and resolve of all stakeholders; policy makers, parents and community members, school management teams and teachers, donor agencies, non-governmental organisations and the corporate world should be to improve on the quality of educational provisions for PWDs. There was the need for all to rally to the mandates of the decentralization policy and its implementation within educational settings in the country. It is my expectation that my study can make some contribution to an understanding of the SEN sector and provide impetus for a concerted effort from all stakeholders to improve on the management of SEN settings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

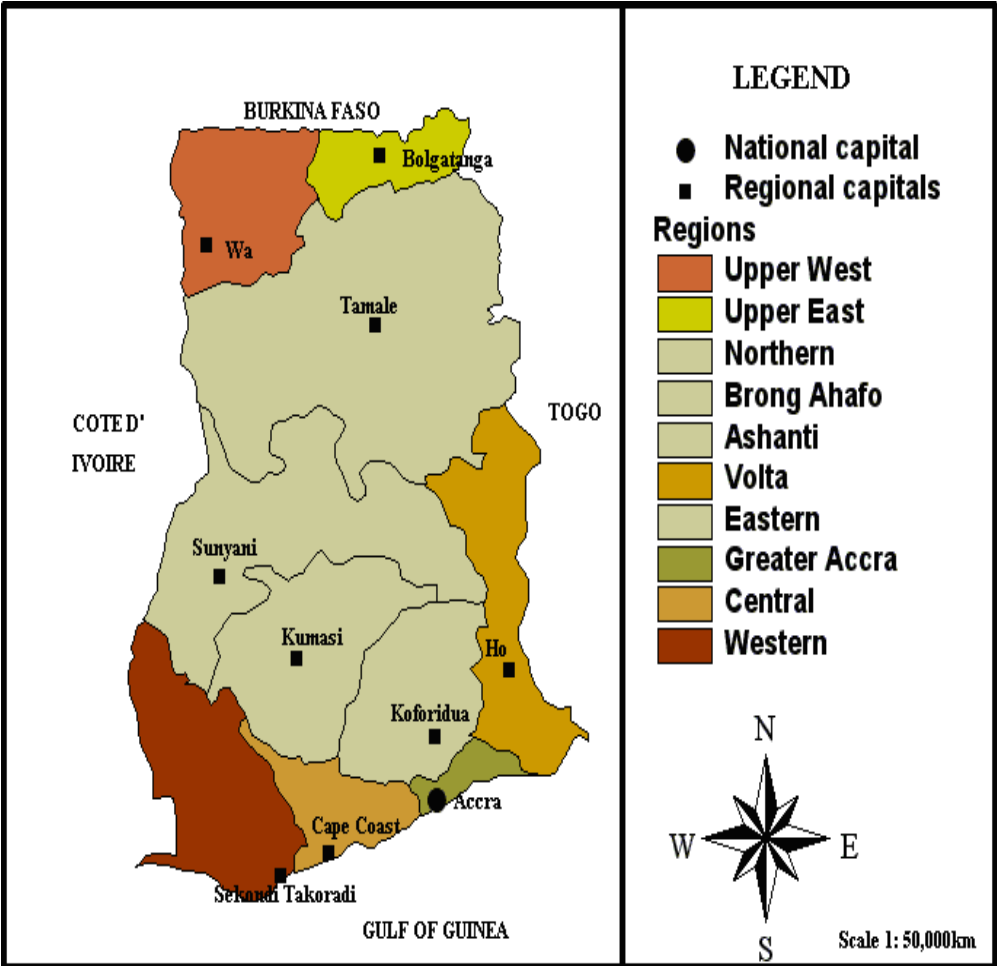
National Enrolment Data-Primary Level

Year	Population	Total	GER	Enrolment	NER	6-11yr olds
	6-11years	enrolment		6-11years		not in school
2002/2003	3,335,794	2,524,585	75.7%	1,865,743	55.9%	1,470,051
2003/2004	3,425,667	2,686,133	78.4%	1,904,846	55.6%	1,520,821
2004/2005	3,518,468	2,929,536	83.3%	2,079,786	59.1%	1,438,682

Source: Ministry of Education

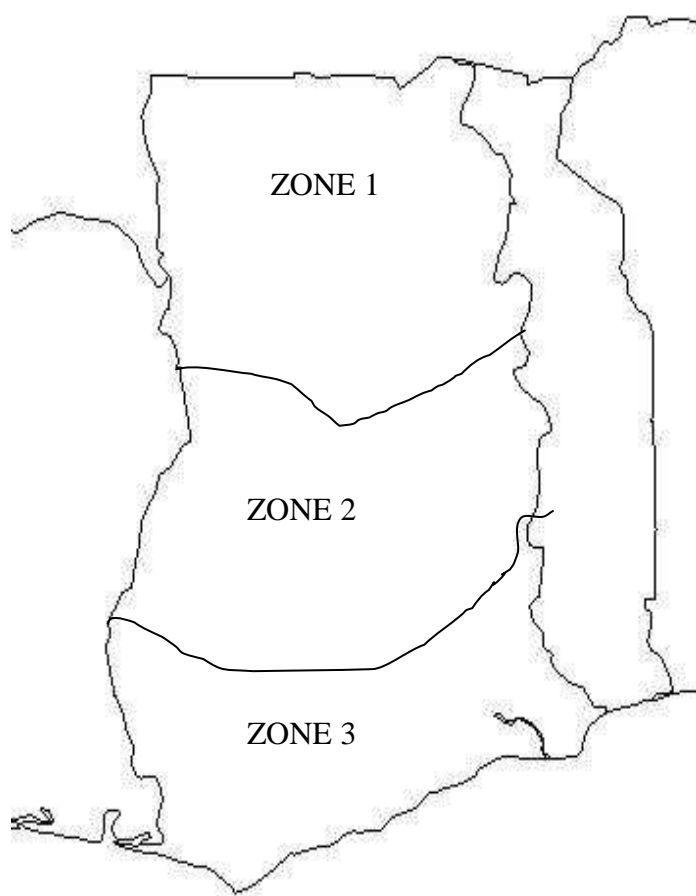
APPENDIX B

Map of Ghana Showing the Regional Capitals



APPENDIX C

Outline Map of Ghana



Source; <http://0.tqn.com/d/geography/1/0/z/J/ghana.jpg>.

Outline map of Ghana showing the demarcation of the country into three zones: Northern (upper top section); Central (middle section) and Southern (bottom section) zones adopted for data collection.



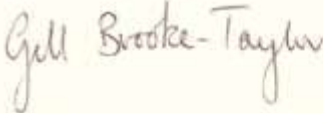

APPENDIX D

DATA DISPLAY SHEET: SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Name of school Pseudonym	Location	Region	Date of establishment	No of pupils;	No. of teaching staff	No. of non- teaching staff	SES	Programmes	Catchment area	Marketing		School- community relations			
										Website	Journal/ newsletter	GES	DA	Parents	Private Sector

APPENDIX E

Letter of introduction from the University of Bath

 <p>Dr Yolande Muschamp Head of Department</p>	<p>UNIVERSITY OF BATH</p> <p>Department of Education Bath BA2 7AY · United Kingdom Telephone +44 (0)1225 38 6341 Facsimile +44 (0)1225 38 6113 Email: education@bath.ac.uk http://www.bath.ac.uk</p>																										
<p>TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN</p> <p>DORA BAABA AIDOO</p> <p>Ms Aidoo is a full time student on the MPhil/PhD programme in the Department of Education at the University of Bath. She began her studies in January 2007 and is expected to complete her studies within three years.</p> <p>Her supervisors are Dr Chris James and Mr Mike Fertig. The subject of her research is: <i>An Analysis of the Management of State-maintained Special Schools for Children with Hearing Impairment in Ghana</i></p> <p>We should be most grateful if you would be kind enough to allow Ms Aidoo access to relevant information and whatever help she needs for her current research. For further information, please contact the Department of Education.</p> <p>Thank you very much.</p>																											
 <p>UNIVERSITY OF BATH Department of Education University of Bath Bath BA2 7AY</p>	<p></p> <p>Gill Brooke-Taylor Research Courses Administrator 24 April 2007</p>																										
<hr/>																											
 <p>INVESTOR IN PEOPLE</p>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td>Enquiries</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Research Degrees (MRes, MPhil, PhD, EdD)</td><td>+44 (0)1225 386545</td></tr><tr><td>MA in Education</td><td>+44 (0)1225 386634</td></tr><tr><td>PGCE</td><td>+44 (0)1225 386612</td></tr><tr><td>Coach Education (BA)</td><td>+44 (0)1225 386653</td></tr><tr><td>Staff Research + Projects</td><td>+44 (0)1225 383418</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>+44 (0)1225 386341</td></tr></table> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td>ed.doc@bath.ac.uk</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>ed.ma@bath.ac.uk</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>pgce@bath.ac.uk</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>coacheducation@bath.ac.uk</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Ed.research@bath.ac.uk</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>education@bath.ac.uk</td><td></td></tr></table>	Enquiries		Research Degrees (MRes, MPhil, PhD, EdD)	+44 (0)1225 386545	MA in Education	+44 (0)1225 386634	PGCE	+44 (0)1225 386612	Coach Education (BA)	+44 (0)1225 386653	Staff Research + Projects	+44 (0)1225 383418	Other	+44 (0)1225 386341	ed.doc@bath.ac.uk		ed.ma@bath.ac.uk		pgce@bath.ac.uk		coacheducation@bath.ac.uk		Ed.research@bath.ac.uk		education@bath.ac.uk	
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Ed.research@bath.ac.uk																											
education@bath.ac.uk																											

APPENDIX F

Letter To Obtain Informed Consent From The Ghana Education Service In A Research On The Management Of State-Maintained Special Schools For Children With Hearing Impairment In Ghana

Letter To Obtain Informed Consent From The Ghana Education Service In A Research On The Management Of State-Maintained Special Schools For Children With Hearing Impairment In Ghana

Dear Sir/Madam,

Permission To Conduct A Study In State-Maintained Schools For The Hearing Impaired In Ghana From The 14th May 2007 – 9th June 2007.

I am a student at the University of Bath, studying the management of state-maintained special schools for hearing impaired children in Ghana. This study is to analyse the current status of management in the under listed schools;

Schools for the Deaf in, Savelugu, Jamasi, Bechem, Kibi, Mampong-Akwapim, Accra, Sekondi, Cape Coast, Hohoe, Wa, Gbeogu.

My study is descriptive, not evaluative. It will not look at the details of the contents of sensitive management decisions. My intention is to capture realistic scenarios in the day-to-day decision-making and implementation that ensure the smooth running of the school.

If I am granted permission to undertake my proposed study, here is an idea of what will happen:

1. I will interview the school head and one head of department to find out about how they conduct their daily management. This interview is expected to take about 45-60 minutes. I will tape record the interview and later transcribe their comments for analysis.
2. I will visit the various departments in the school to have a general impression of what goes on in the school during and out of formal school hours.
3. After collecting the data for my study, I will analyze the results. Participants will be given the opportunity to read the portion of my report that relates to their school.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If proposed respondents decide to participate, they will be free to withdraw their consent and discontinue participation at any stage they wish to do so in the study.

All data collected will be confidential and will only be disclosed with participants' permission. The data remains the property of the researcher. Data will be handled according to the British Educational Research Associations guidelines. All possible safeguards will be taken to protect participants' anonymity. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me;

Dora Baaba Aidoo (+44 07804506579), or my university supervisor;
Dr Chris James (+44 1225 383280).

I count on your anticipated cooperation in this matter. Thank you.


Dora Baaba Aidoo

*The Headmaster, kindly give the bearer,
Dora Aidoo (me) the necessary help she needs.*

J. H. S. S.
Asst. Director (FI. & Adm.)
GHANA NATIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE
C/O. COAST

APPENDIX G

Letter To Obtain Informed Consent From Participants In A Research On The Management Of State-Maintained Special Schools For Children With Hearing Impairment In Ghana

Dear Sir/Madam,

Permission To Conduct A Study In State-Maintained Schools For The Hearing Impaired In Ghana, May, 2007 – June, 2007.

I am a student at the University of Bath, studying the management of state-maintained special schools for hearing impaired children in Ghana. This study is to analyse the current status of management in the under listed schools;

Schools for the Deaf in, Savelugu, Jamasi, Bechem, Kibi, Mampong-Akwapim, Accra, Sekondi, Cape Coast, Hohoe, Wa, Gbeogu.

My study is descriptive, not evaluative. It will not look at the details of the contents of sensitive management decisions. My intention is to capture realistic scenarios in the day-to-day decision-making and implementation that ensure the running of the school.

If I am granted permission to undertake my proposed study, here is an idea of what will happen:

1. I will interview the school head and one head of department to find out about how they conduct their daily management. This interview is expected to take about 45-60 minutes. I will tape record the interview and later transcribe their comments for analysis.
2. I will visit the various departments in the school to have a general impression of what goes on in the school during and out of formal school hours.
3. After collecting the data for my study, I will analyze the results. Participants will be given the opportunity to read the portion of my report that relates to their school.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If proposed respondents decide to participate, they will be free to withdraw their consent and discontinue participation at any stage they wish to do so in the study.

All data collected will be confidential and will only be disclosed with participants' permission. The data remains the property of the researcher. Data will be handled according to the British Educational Research Associations guidelines. All possible safeguards will be taken to protect participants' anonymity. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me;

Dora Baaba Aidoo (+44 07804506579), or my university supervisor;

Dr Chris James (+44 1225 383280).

I count on your anticipated cooperation in this matter. Thank you.

Dora Baaba Aidoo

APPENDIX H
A SAMPLING OF PICTURES FROM THE FIELDWORK



H1: A school's crest showing the motto drawn from the school's mission and vision



H2: A school farm used for practical lessons. Funds from sale of proceeds form part of internally generated funds



H3: Every space is a learning point. A mural showing maps of Africa and Ghana



H4: The crux of the unique educational needs of the HI. Text is meaningful if the sign can be found



H5: Vocational class in session



H6: A staff room with signs. Teachers also need to learn signs to communicate



H7: The head's office doubles as the school library



H8: Another vocational class in session



H9: Free play while teacher interacts with researcher

APPENDIX I

DATA DISPLAY SHEET: APPLICATION OF POSDCoRB IN THE ANALYSIS OF THE MANAGEMENT OF SMSSCHI (INTERVIEW WITH SMCs)

Function		Who	How	When	Where	What	Links with Parents	Links with community	Links with GES	Links with private sector	Challenges
Planning: Outlining in broad terms the things that need to be done and the methods for doing them to accomplish set organisational goals	S 1										
	S 2										
	S 3										
	S 4										
	S 5										
	S 6										
	S 7										

APPENDIX J

SAMPLE DATA DISPLAY SHEET: APPLICATION OF POSDCoRB IN THE ANALYSIS OF THE MANAGEMENT OF SMSSCHI (INTERVIEW WITH SMCs)

Function		Who	How	When	Where	What	Links with Parents	Links with community	Links with GES	Links with private sector	Challenges
Organising : Establishing the formal structure of authority through work sub-divisions e.g. decentralised/centralised decision-making	S1										
	S2										
	S3										
	S4										
	S5										
	S6										
	S7										

APPENDIX K

SAMPLE INTERVIEW WITH AN NGO OFFICIAL

Researcher;

Can you please give me some information on your dealings with the schools for the deaf in Ghana especially the Cape Coast School?

Organisational Head;

For the School we actually run them for about ten years and then later on, funding ended from our donors so we also stopped but in 2003/2004 when I went there the head at that time, Mr. Kojo or so came to me to complain and at that time I had some special 10,000 dollars so I decided that I will give it to them but I wanted to be very specific that they will use it for something that will add value to their operational system not just to feed them so I approached Dr Kweku at the Global 2000. He was also doing some work there so I agreed that... they had a piggery and we before we left we did a nice piggery for them, putting up structures and we expected that they will use it to generate income so that it becomes sustainable when we are not there but as usual they didn't manage it well. Normally they think that funding will be coming and when you are asking them...so I said ok I am going to revive the piggery so with the help of Dr. Kweku we re-staffed the whole place and changed the structures for them to function and then we decided to use some of the medicals, buy drugs for the children to make sure that they... we wanted to use some of the money to buy mosquito netting but they said they were ok so we used...

Actually it was doing well and they expecting to have funding but when I went there I told them that, 'look, its just by the grace of God that we got this money and am prepared to give it to you. You are no more in within our regular funding stream...so make sure that this will help you to manage ...and the pigs were doing well. We had a rabbitery too and they will and they were all fine, they had a garden too and so that's that. Unfortunately, the head was transferred when we just finished with the project he had moved to Accra so I don't even know who is there right now.

Researcher;

Its one new head.I think that was the deputy.

Organisational Head;

The head has been calling me to come and look at what is happening but I couldn't go there because that time I was supervising four regions so I didn't have the time to go. They even ...seen they are arranging...Mampong if you go there we have the same thing for them. You will see that we have poultry for them. We also have a piggery for them, we are also putting up ...if they are not sustainable it's because they are misappropriating because if you go to the poultry you can see that the structures we put up for them. We also built some bungalows for their staff.

Researcher;

Yes I have been there and two bungalows were being put up.

Organisational Head;

Yes, what I know is that we did two and commissioned them before I left last two years and we handed them over. In fact they said they wanted another one but I said we were ending our funding but if the income they generate from their IGA will be used to do that, it will not be our problem. But I actually wanted them to ...since then I have not been there so this is what we were doing for the deaf.

Researcher;

Why has funding for schools for the deaf been cut?

Organisational Head;

The reason for our part we didn't want them to stop but there have been policy changes in our donor countries. For instance the Cape Coast School is supported by World Vision Australia. You know the movement that is going through the north or the advanced countries, they say it is discriminatory to go and lock up people with physical disabilities or challenges as one instead they should be integrated into the community and our argument has been that yes we agree but they were the very people who instituted these schools in the first place in Ghana. They serve a very good purpose because if I had bumped into a deaf and dumb I know the institution I can send the child and know the child will receive a quality education. But if I leave a child in our school system it hasn't got the resources or the trained personnel to manage that. I know that the Cape Coast school has got some teachers and they have some blind people, about four or five children, I went and saw the children, I felt it but I could not help them. So the pressure ...yea they said they would not fund the school. I even took a lady to the site to see more than a hundred children for herself. They said we should not give them... We say that much as you people have advanced and will not use this method to help them, we have not advanced to that stage. Until our school system and our communities are willing to accept people like that... and manage them and help them to develop the potential within them, we should not do so because some people will suffer but... and we also don't have any independent funding.

Researcher;

Why then do they support the blind? I find it rather intriguing.

Organisational Head:

The reason is that they are supported by different countries; Cape Coast by Australia, Akropong by USA. USA raised the same issue but we argued and they agreed to it. So all USA supported projects are on-going. Sekondi and Begoro are still being funded. UK, N.Zealand and Australia ...I have even got the documents on how to integrate them into communities. So that has been our big challenge. We don't agree with it but as long as we cannot get funding...so we wanted to do advocacy work for them because if I look at the population structure within the school they come from different parts of the country and I felt that either we find a way of mobilizing the district assemblies... we do a proper data analysis and say that look 5 or 20 of these children come from your district so now that the government law requires that at least a percentage of the common fund be allocated to them can you give a part to support these children in the schools then the school will have a way. I even discussed that with them but they need advocacy, somebody to raise these issues then fight for them because then that is another route. When I was leaving, I was asking what will become of them ...just giving some small

IGAs to enable them to function, we need a sort of permanent flow of support, unfortunately the government laws allowing some allowance for disability and vulnerability in the country so if about ...20 of the people are coming from your district then just give some... if in a year you can give some 5m...

Researcher;

But they tell me it's for adult disabled and not the children?

Organisational Head;

Its not adult disabled, it's for everybody. No. It's not true. Does the school have the facilities to support the blind children? No. It's for all of them, all vulnerable groups so that's why I say they need strong advocacy.

Researcher;

How far have you gone on this?

No, we haven't. We haven't done anything about, we have this idea and we need somebody to really work on it so what we can do is to work on a proposal, collect the data, analyse it and that all requires work. Somebody needs to look at where these districts are, where they have come from, what type of ...and then we can use that to lobby government and say that look, they should put pressure ,maybe local government on the District Assembly to use part of that allocation and then on the ground we need to lobby District Chief Executives. If you get a good DCE, they will give you the money. It's not a problem because we have actually done it for school buildings. We go and collect bags of cement, 300million, we've done that and give them to the special schools and if they invest it properly, they can function. But for me I told them that internal support, what we have done locally if they manage it well, they should survive because we put a bore-hole there in front of the school and the poultry infrastructure and we were saying that we will have another funding we were planning on having another r hundred birds, they should be able to make enough money...but Ghanaians as usual, I don't know whether ...I've not bothered to even go there, because at times you go there and ...

Researcher;

That was the next question I was going to ask. . You have had extensive interaction with the heads. How do you normally do your interaction? When you have a project for example, who brings up the idea? Do you just go into the schools and tell them you want to come and do a project or they come to you?

Organisational Head;

Initially, you know when we started around the 80s...something that is why I said it all depends on the political movement at the ...there was a focus on the handicapped ,in fact I've got documents .They are now asking that we focus on vulnerability . We even do a vulnerability assessment before we can fund a project. Initially because their attitude ...so that time the focus was what are you doing about the handicapped children? We are a child-focused organization do if you go and pick 3000 children and 20 are handicapped what do you do? So that's what moved us into those schools. So without...we

started looking for institutions which are already established .We organized these children ,I worked in East Dangbe before so , I found some children in the Ningo area so I just mobilized them...and moved all of them into Akuapem Blind because there will get proper treatment and education. When the parents agreed, then all I did was to pay for their school fees, arrange transportation, and arrange for parents to visit. So at times they appeal and you just look for funding because there are some children and you want the institution that can take care of them, so you go there and adopt them. Thereafter, you... a project not just for the five children you have sent but for all the children inside. So you may do a ...programme, we do medicals, we get some detergents for them, mosquito netting. So when we were leaving then we decided that look let's start some thing sustainable, you know, so that it will work before ...at times they are disappointing because Soup Children's home, if I tell you the amount of money we have spent there ,everyday the woman is on TV, they don't have money, it's a lie. You just need to go to the place and see the amount of investment we have made in the place and see the amount of investment we have made in the place. We have even built guest houses for them to rent out and are a big hall, we did so many things for them but she will tell the whole world that people have come and dumped a child, that's a lie.

Researcher;

It's more of school management can't manage what you have given them.

Organisational Head;

Another problem too is that government subvention is too low. You know, they pay about 1000/2000 per child and too with a lot of poor management ... and that too with a lot of poor management, so what we are doing now, its not that they can't manage. If I had my way, nobody will send money to Osu Children's home because I went and built all those things. They are renting the hall, collecting about 500 cedis each time. The project is still operational and how many children are there/...

... The facility we have put there can take care of 1000 children... It's corruption between GES and...so its very discouraging but Mampong ...they were picking up so my hope is that one day I want to...because last time...they have added snail farming and they said we should add snail farming. So if the management of the institutions is fine there will be no problem.

So basically you find that it 's more of a management problem. They should find creative ways . As we are talking about advocacy, they should ... especially if they have the facts and they can produce data. Plenty of these ...and please support us in any way that you can... for we are taking care of your children here. Am sure one DCE will respond. Some may not but one will respond, but they are of the view of always waiting for government subvention or NGO to come... but creatively what are you also doing/

Researcher;

So would you think it's because they do not have any strategic plans in place?

Organisational Head;

Yes, they don't have plans on how to develop sustainable programmes but like a head teacher is posted to a primary school or JSS and then they say the government brings it, it is fine, if they don't ,it is fine, and they are expecting that it should be like the normal boarding school where they will go and get the subvention from government and so ...but if they are lucky and we get some NGO support and they want ...

I know the demand is great because there are many children on the waiting list, that one am aware of but they should also demonstrate...self-financing because once you do that then you become creative then some else will come.

APPENDIX L

SAMPLE OBSERVATION DIARY ENTRY FOR PHASE 2

7.45

I arrived at the school compound and had a brief meeting with the ASH.

Compound was neatly swept and children were busily getting ready for school.

It was strange to hear speech until I realised it was coming from the blind pupils on the compound.

For the first time since I started data collection I saw a child with hearing aid but I could not interact with him due to laid down research ethics.

Over the hills a short distance away, the sound of children singing could be heard. This signified that morning assembly was going on in the neighbouring mainstream school.

Children were at morning assembly in the mainstream school whilst children were walking about in this special school. Gradually, some children congregated in front of the main classroom block and formed lines. Morning assembly was here at a last.

8.10

Morning assembly was closed. There was no teacher present. Roughly half of the children attended assembly and a prefect playfully gave a stroke of the cane to children who arrived late on the assembly grounds. Day students and some staff from the Cape Coast Metropolis arrived on the compound onboard the school's bus.

Blind students did not participate in the general morning assembly having entered their classroom for lessons immediately they finished with breakfast.

8.15

One teacher came up to shoo the children into their relevant classrooms. One house mother escorted a child to the classroom. Roughly 70 of the children were smartly dressed. The rest were in tattered clothing which are very dirty.

8.45

Teachers were assembled on a veranda compiling personal records which the Ghana Educational Service was demanding to upgrade staff data.

8.45

The schools bursar reports for work.

8.55

Things start to settle down as lessons begin. I watched a PE lesson. It was interesting to note that girls played alone whilst boys did their own thing in another corner of the field.

I also visited the carpentry centre and interacted with the students who were at work. These were boys who were graduates of the basic school system from the schools in the western and central regions who had come back as apprentices. The school head indicated that the apprentices were more comfortable in the school since communication was easy as compared to their working in a mainstream, hearing environment.

10.10

Officials from an insurance company visited the administration to make a donation of money towards the running of the school.

10.30

As part of the preparation of the children in the Junior High School for adult life, there was a lesson on voting procedures for the pupils in the three classes. Pupils enthusiastically participated in proceedings and took turns to demonstrate how to listen to someone delivering a manifesto as well as the actual voting process. Children from the lower school periodically turned up to satisfy their curiosity whilst the apprentices from the nearby textiles unit also took breaks from their practical lessons to peep on to the training sessions.

11.00

I watched a tie-dye session in the textiles unit. This class was made up of both males and females who actively participated in the various processes. As the apprentices dried the cloth they had dyed there was a sense of pride on their faces for their accomplishment.

APPENDIX M

SAMPLE CASE STUDY REPORT

Study School 1 is located in a part of Ghana which occupies roughly 70, 383 square kilometres, a land area reputed to be the largest of all the regions in the country and was the setting where the study was piloted.

The land is mostly low lying except in the north-eastern corner with the Gambaga escarpment and along the western corridor. The region is drained by the Black and white Volta and their tributaries, Rivers Nasia, Daka, etc. The region is well known for its peculiar architecture of round huts with conical thatched roofs, which provide a particular scenic view.

The people are mostly peasant farmers and with a large majority of the able bodied youth leaving the area for more lucrative jobs down south, this part of Ghana is among the four poorest regions. The majority of the people are Moslems who in earlier times shunned formal education since they saw it to be 'christianisation' of their children.

Children with disabilities in Ghana are seen as curses or punishment from the gods and are relegated to the background. Parents see them as not being able to contribute anything to the economic well-being of the family and therefore are very reluctant to spend scarce money on their education (head teacher; Asiedu-Akrofi, 1978). Various educational campaigns and initiatives has gradually led to an increased demand for formal education for the CHI. At the time of the visit for instance, a local NGO had brought CHI and their families together and organised a day's trip to the school for an interaction.

BRIEF CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND TO SCHOOL

Started thirty years ago as a mainstream school, the school in the 2006/2007 academic year has an enrolment of 248 pupils rising from 227 in the 2003/2004 academic year. This, the headteacher attributes this to an increased awareness created throughout the catchment area of the benefits of education for CHI. This number could have been more but facilities at the school are overstretched as it is to accommodate the current numbers, confirming the assertion that only about 0.6% of persons with disabilities (PWDs) are benefiting from formal education in Ghana (Ohene, 2006). The school has a large catchment area, serving eighteen (18) districts within the region. This means places are few and there is a long waiting list for CHI to be placed.

There is trained teaching staff of 24 which means that pupil-teacher ratios are very high, subsequently impacting the quality of the teaching –learning transaction in the classroom. In order to help minimise the negative effect of this, the headmistress has recruited some adult deaf who are alumna of the school to serve as teaching assistants. From time to time, the school benefits from Volunteers from other countries. At the time of the visit, there was a volunteer from the Peace Corps who was scheduled to be with the school for two years. Another volunteer comes in periodically to help with screening. Again, the University of Education, Winneba, which trains special education teachers in the country place some of their teachers on a year's internship at the school, helping to address problems of teacher shortage.

Management Procedures in Study School 2

Management activities within the school is analysed using the POSDCoRB paradigm designed by Gulick and Urwick (1937). Whilst this paradigm has been described as out of date, contemporary paradigms only use different metaphors to describe the same activities. For me, the paradigm provides a robust platform from which the management activities of the school can be examined. Links of the school to its environment is also examined as a means of extending the POSDCoRB paradigm with the open systems theory to describe the current status of the management of SMSSCHI in Ghana.

PLANNING

Planning was a regular practice that took place within the school. This was done cooperatively;

SH1;

Normally at the beginning of the year, we decide what we have to do... we have our staff meeting... We set our objectives and we take our mission statement and our vision, then our objectives, how we hope to achieve these together as a staff...

This fact was collaborated by my having to wait for a general staff meeting to end before I could meet with the school head.

What was missing was a documentation of the plans that had been made. This made an analysis of the managerial philosophies and orientation of the school difficult to analyse. However, it can be surmised that the lack of a documented plan indicated the use of a contingent type of planning which was practised to solve problems as and when they arose.

Participation in decisions or planning was distributed as decisions were arrived at during staff meetings. Again the establishment and utilisation of committees encouraged a collegial approach to school management.

ORGANISING

Activities in the school are organised around the bureaucratic structures designed by the GES (refer to Fig 1). The head is the Chief executive officer of the school, implementing decisions taken by the SMC and the staff. The assistant school head is in charge of the academic activities of the school, over seeing all curricular activities with the help of the various departmental heads.

Domestic affairs are overseen largely by the senior housemaster or mistress with their team. To help children have an acceptable quality of life after school, each dormitory is assigned a housemother who oversees the domestic activities of the children. Older pupils are assigned younger pupils to 'mentor' under the supervision of the housemother and in the words of Jenson (2007) 'end up behaving like a family'.

DIRECTING

Described as the continuous task of making decisions and embodying them in specific and general orders'... (De Grazia, 2006) School 1 has an established committee system in place where staff members have the opportunity to participate in school decision making. Pupils are however not members on any committee though prefects may be roped in to help in the implantation of some decisions.

Staff behaviour is regulated according to the code of ethics of the GES while pupils' behaviour is regulated through school rules and regulations.

COORDINATING

The organisation of the school's activities is coordinated in various ways as discussed under organising. The school and the assistant do the monitoring for the academic activities of the school. The bursar is in charge of the support staff members who provide vital support for the day to day running of the school. Scheduled teachers are in charge of extra curricular activities. All these various activities are coordinated by sectional heads and the two school heads.

STAFFING

Teaching and non-teaching staff are posted to the school from the GES. Staff numbers for required positions are adequately manned. However, trained specialist teachers in education of the hearing impairment (EHI) are not enough. The teacher-pupil ratio is above the recommended 6/1, making the work of teachers difficult and reducing the effectiveness of the teaching/learning interaction in the school. According to one respondent this *'gave them stress and a feeling of helplessness as they simply cannot cope with the large numbers'*.

Some reasons accounting for this were ascribed to the poor economic conditions in the town. Qualified teachers were reluctant to accept posting because they could not put their children in good schools and enjoy the basic amenities taken for granted in big towns, for example the school does not have potable water. Again teachers when faced with the paucity of basic resources to facilitate their teaching turn their backs on their training and move to mainstream schools where it is easier to teach concepts and achieve tangible results in student outcomes (Headteacher; Avoke, 2002).

Teachers who choose to stay are given orientation on-site and assigned to classes. To help newly-trained teachers adjust to teaching using sign language, the school has assigned some deaf adults who are alumna of the school to help in translation. There are regular sessions in sign language for all members of staff as the policy of the GES is for instruction to be done through sign language. The school tries to look for accommodation in the town or pair teachers up in the few bungalows on the school compound. Since the school is on the outskirts of the town, staff are given lunch to help tide them over until they went home. This is also used as a motivational technique to help teachers concentrate on their activities.

REPORTING

As an organisation that exists in an environment and is funded from public and private funds the school has to report internally and externally to relevant stakeholders on its activities. These stakeholders include the GES, NGOs, Parents (external) and staff and pupils (internal). Internally, reporting is done through circulars and notices posted on the notice board or announced at staff meetings. Pupils are given relevant information as and when relevant information for them comes up.

Externally, the school accounts for its activities through reports and letters to the GES. The head also sometimes interacts with the District assembly and occasionally appears on the local FM to give some information on the school to the community. One other strategy used is that of the cultural troupe giving performances in the community as a means of showcasing the capabilities of the deaf. Teachers take the opportunity to give short talks to the audience. Parents also get reports on the school's activities through the discussions that take place during PTA meetings. What was missing was a mechanism for reporting to the global community, though the head asserted that volunteers to the school took back reports to their native communities.

BUDGETING

Budgeting was an activity undertaken by the head and the bursar. They practised the incremental type of design where projections for the ensuing year are made based on the previous year's expenditures. The head indicated that inputs from staff are incorporated into the budget through a submission of requisitions submitted to the school head before the budgeting cycle starts. Pupils are not part of the decision making in budgeting.

CONCLUSION

The POSDCORB paradigm was used to examine the internal management practices of the school. The following section assesses how the school interacts with identified entities within its environment that potentially can impact the management of the school.

INTERACTION WITH ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES

LINKS WITH PARENTS

There is a PTA which meets regularly within the school for parents to appraise the school's activities. The relationship is described as cordial. The management though suggest that parental involvement in the school was too marginal. Parents are reported as leaving their children in the school for a whole term with the minimum of interaction. The recurring metaphor used to describe this interaction is 'dumping'. All the respondents intimated that parents dumped the children in the school and virtually forgot about them to the extent that some children have to be taken home to parents or left on the school's compound till parents were ready to pick them up.

LINKS WITH GES

The GES is the authorising agency for the school. This duty is performed by the DDE. However, since the school serves the whole of the region, no DDE is in direct control of the school. The head therefore liaises directly with the Head of the Special Education Directorate of the GES. However, there is a close collaboration between the school and the local educational directorate within the school's immediate environs. Participation of GES management in the school occurs when the various peripatetic teachers occasionally visit the school to oversee their activities and in some cases, refer children to the school. Circuit officers who are the

scheduled to supervise some demarcated areas within the district may also pop in from time to time.

As a state maintained boarding basic school, the uniqueness of its status makes it difficult for education management to place it within the educational management system of any one district within a region. Respondents therefore were of the opinion that they were left out when activities are being planned at the district directorate of education. The school head has had to put in some effort to gain recognition within the directorate. Links with the national headquarters is kept through officials from the headquarters visiting the school occasionally or the management may be invited to attend meetings at the headquarters.

LINKS WITH PRIVATE SECTOR (DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS)

There is a very vibrant relationship with development partners. The Catholic Relief Services plays a critical role in the management of the school through its school feeding supplementation programme. Various other bodies help in monetary and non-monetary avenues. The head and the SMC have to actively and aggressively pursue assistance from these bodies as government subvention is inadequate (Headteacher; Casely-Hayford, 2002).

A lot of infrastructural development and funds for maintenance come from the private sector, facilitating the day to day management of the school, for instance some NGOs give funds for in-service training of teachers, some provide teaching materials.

LINKS WITH COMMUNITY

The school has a good relationship with its immediate environment. The location of the school on the outskirts of the town, however limits the physical contact with the people. Again, as the school serves the whole community of the region, fostering close links with the community is problematic as no one community can claim 'ownership' of the school.

CHALLENGES

1. Inadequate numbers of teachers
2. Teaching/Learning Materials(TLM)
3. Parental Attitude
4. Attitude of District Director of Education(DDE)
5. Accommodation for teachers
6. Infrastructure
7. Curriculum Assessment procedures
8. Pupil Outcomes

OBSERVATIONS/IMPRESSIONS

Introduction

This was the first school within the sample set and formed the setting for the piloting of the data collection procedures and instruments.

Day 1; Date; 16 / 05 / 07

I arrived at the District Education Office to interact with the District Director of Education (DDE) on my intention to visit the school for the deaf under her jurisdiction. I had not been able to make a prior appointment as

official telephone links were not in place. The DDE was not in and I interacted with some other members of staff who took my contact details and gave me permission to visit the school since children were not my main respondents.

I arrived at the school to find the staff at a general staff meeting. However, one person came out to welcome to the school and to ask my mission. Apparently they thought I was an official either from an NGO or the GES. I opted to wait until the staff meeting was over in order to meet with the head.

I decided to use the time to take a tour of the school premises. I was treated to an enlightening tour by some of the kids who were excited to see a lady with a camera snapping pictures of things that caught her fancy. Since I was able to sign my name, they quickly adopted me and took me to other children who had residual hearing and had some amount of speech for an interaction. They then took me to their library, football and volleyball pitches and a central point on the school compound where the Ghana flag was mounted. I found their choices very interesting as without speech, they conveyed what they found to be important in the school. It was interesting to note that they informed me that girls played netball and boys, football, reflecting the stereotyping that exists within the Ghanaian society. Could I therefore infer from this that the children were being socialised one way or the other into typical Ghanaian mentality through basic activities like sports within the school? It set my mind wondering about how the 'hidden curriculum' was impacting concept formation for the CHI in the school.

My impressions were that a lot of efforts were in place to provide a standard education for the children. However, buildings were badly in need of painting and maintenance of broken doors and windows. There were a lot of health and safety concerns e.g. an unused concrete water reservoir which was left uncovered posed a hazard for the small children who could easily fall in. Children were very happy and friendly though many were very poorly dressed. A large number had various skin diseases which were later explained to be the result of the children having to use stagnant water for their baths in the dry season.

At ten o'clock in the morning I observed the children in basic one to three and the kindergarten have a snack under a shed since the staff meeting was taking place in the dinning hall. Snack was maize porridge. When I inquired why the children were taking that heavy meal (which is normally taken at breakfast) at that time of the day, I was informed that the children were normally too hungry around 10.00 am and exhibited disruptive behaviour in class if they did not have a meal.

After two and a half hours the staff meeting finally came to an end and I was invited to join the headmistress in her office. I introduced myself and gave her a gist of the purpose of my visit to the school. She then agreed to grant me the interview. The interview which was scheduled to last for forty minutes however took two hours as there were frequent interruptions to enable the head attend to her day to day interaction with staff and other visitors who dropped by. I found her cautious and helpful to people who stopped by. The head's responses showed a firm grip on the execution of her administrative practices. Her discussion showed someone who was determined to make an impact on the lives of the children she has been charged with. She displayed a sound knowledge of the day to day management of the school and

its environment. She showed her documented vision and mission for the school which were displayed in her office.

One of such visitors to the school was the school head for School Two which I was scheduled to visit during the week. I arranged to meet him within the week as there were no telephone facilities for use in his school and his personal phone was also out of order.

My major concerns was one, a lack of a documented plan of action or strategic plan which should have shaped the execution of the decisions taken by staff and SMC, and two, the apparent lack of active classes in the school.

APPENDIX N

Sample-Transcripts of Interviews (SMC)

PLANNING

R;

May I know about the planning that goes on in the school?

What kinds of plans do you usually make in the management of the school?

SMC;

Like any school we have committees that help in the running of the school.

For academic programmes, we follow the guidelines put forward by the GES for teaching-learning activities. So at the beginning of each term, there is a staff meeting normally for academic activities, we have teaching staff meeting to plan teaching learning activities. If it's the beginning of the academic year, we do classification then each person knows which class he is going to take.

We give them the materials for them to plan their Teaching/Learning activities. Then as they do their work, we go round to supervise.

Teaching learning activities... the materials needed are normally given out by the Assistant Headmaster, who is in charge academic affairs in the school.

As teachers plan their lesson notes they bring them for vetting every week, then we supervise as they teach.

I go round the classrooms to see they are teaching, we discuss where there are lapses.

We have a timetable for the school. Normally at the beginning of the year, we decide what we have to do so when I took over here; we had our staff meeting...

We set our objectives and we took our mission statement and our vision, then our objectives, how we hope to achieve these together as a staff and then at a staff meeting we took a look at objectives and how we will achieve and these are on display.

(Our mission objectives)

One of them is to organise properly material and human resources for the benefit of the child.

Others are to source for funds from NGOs and other voluntary organisations and philanthropists to get materials that government has not been able to supply.

One other aim is to provide vocationally-based training for the deaf children because we know there are no opportunities for higher education for them. We don't have workshops for them even though we have some equipment donated by some NGOs.

We also said we will follow up the district assemblies to provide what they can so that NGOs can supplement.

We normally discuss these issues at staff meetings and agree on what to do. The head then takes it up to the place by writing a proposal or letter asking for assistance. In case we get responses to our letters ... it depends on the area where we need the help... like we wrote the US embassy on water as a problem. Someone is in charge of the project, we look for someone to come and do the work and provide receipts for collection by the officers.

When we get..... I share with staff members who are capable If I know that this staff is able, I bring them in to help.

APPENDIX O

Transcript Template

PLANNING

May I know something about the planning that goes on in the school?
What kinds of plans do you usually make in the management of the school?
Does the school have a strategic plan?
How often do you have these planning sessions?
Who takes part in the planning?
Where do the sessions take place?
Do students take part in the planning sessions?

ORGANISING

May I please know how authority is structured in the school?
Are there any committees in place?
What sort of decisions do these committees take?
Who are the members of these committees?
Are students represented on these committees?
How often do these committees meet?

STAFFING

How are teachers recruited into the school?
Are teachers given any orientation before placement?
Are teachers given any in-service training?
What are the areas covered under these training sessions?
What measures are in place to motivate teachers in the school?
How effective are the motivational techniques?

DIRECTING

What is the nature instruction given in the school?
How are instructions given in school?
Who gives these instructions?
How effective are the generation and implantation of these instructions?
When are these instructions given?

COORDINATING

What type of monitoring takes place in the school?
Who is responsible for monitoring?
Are there any rules and regulations in place?
How do you get members of the school community to conform to set rules and regulations?
How are members rewarded for acceptable behaviour?
How are non-conforming members discouraged from deviant behaviour?

REPORTING

Who does the school report to?

How is this reporting done to;

- staff members?
- School children?
- Parents?
- Local Community?
- GES?
- International community?
- Development partners?

Who is responsible for reporting?

When does reporting take place?

BUDGETING

How is budgeting done in the school?

Who are involved in the process?

When does budgeting take place?

How often does budgeting take place?